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THE  
**eYe**

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# CONSUMING THE FUTURE

**ETHICS IN ADVERTISING  
BUDDHIST ECONOMICS**





THE COLOUR OF THE ISSUE IS



A fresco in Ajanta Caves

### ULTRAMARINE BLUE

*"Ultramarine Blue is a colour, illustrious, beautiful, and most perfect, beyond all other colours; one could not say anything about it, or do anything with it, that its quality would not still surpass."*

*- Cennino Cennini, 14th-15th Cent. Italian Painter.*

Ultramarine, the tender retiring blue colour, was for centuries, the most highly prized of all traditional pigments not only on account of its intrinsic value but also for its durability and excellent colour. At all times the demand exceeded supply.

It is derived from lapis lazuli, a semi precious stone, which is a mineral of the sodalite group. One of the best known mines is in the Khoka Valley in Afghanistan.

Ancient Indian Shilpa texts dealing with painting refer to lapis lazuli as "Rajavarta". In the *Manasollasa* (circa 12th Century) it is compared to the flower "atasi" (common flax). It is suggested that "rajavarta" is a sanskritised form of the Persian word "Lazward", the source of Ultramarine.

The stone is heated, then fractured by plunging in cold water after which it is crushed and ground. It is then dried and applied by mixing with a binding medium like Gum Arabic. Cennino Cennini prescribes in his 'Artist's Handbook' an elaborate process of extracting ultramarine from lapis lazuli, and it is interesting to note that the process is not unlike the one prescribed in the "Silparatna" (16th century) for earthen and mineral colours. (For oil painting, poppy oil was preferred.)

In India, it was used in the Ajanta Murals in the 5th century AD., in the illustrated palm leaf manuscripts of the 11th Cent., in the Jain "Kalpasutras" executed between 12th and 16th Cent. and in the Mughal miniatures.

Nowadays ultramarine is produced synthetically.

-Anupam Sah-

Final Year student of Conservation,  
National Museum, New Delhi.







**Editor**

*Rukmini Sekhar*

**Subscriptions & Finance**

*Sujata Pandey*

**Poetry Editor**

*Mayura Tiwari*

**Editorial Assistant**

*Jayashree Menon Kurup*

**Patron**

*Col. M.C. Malhotra*

**Editorial Address**

**THE EYE,**

143, Golf Links,

II Floor,

New Delhi-110 003

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Enclave,

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**Cover picture:**

Malcolm Baldwin

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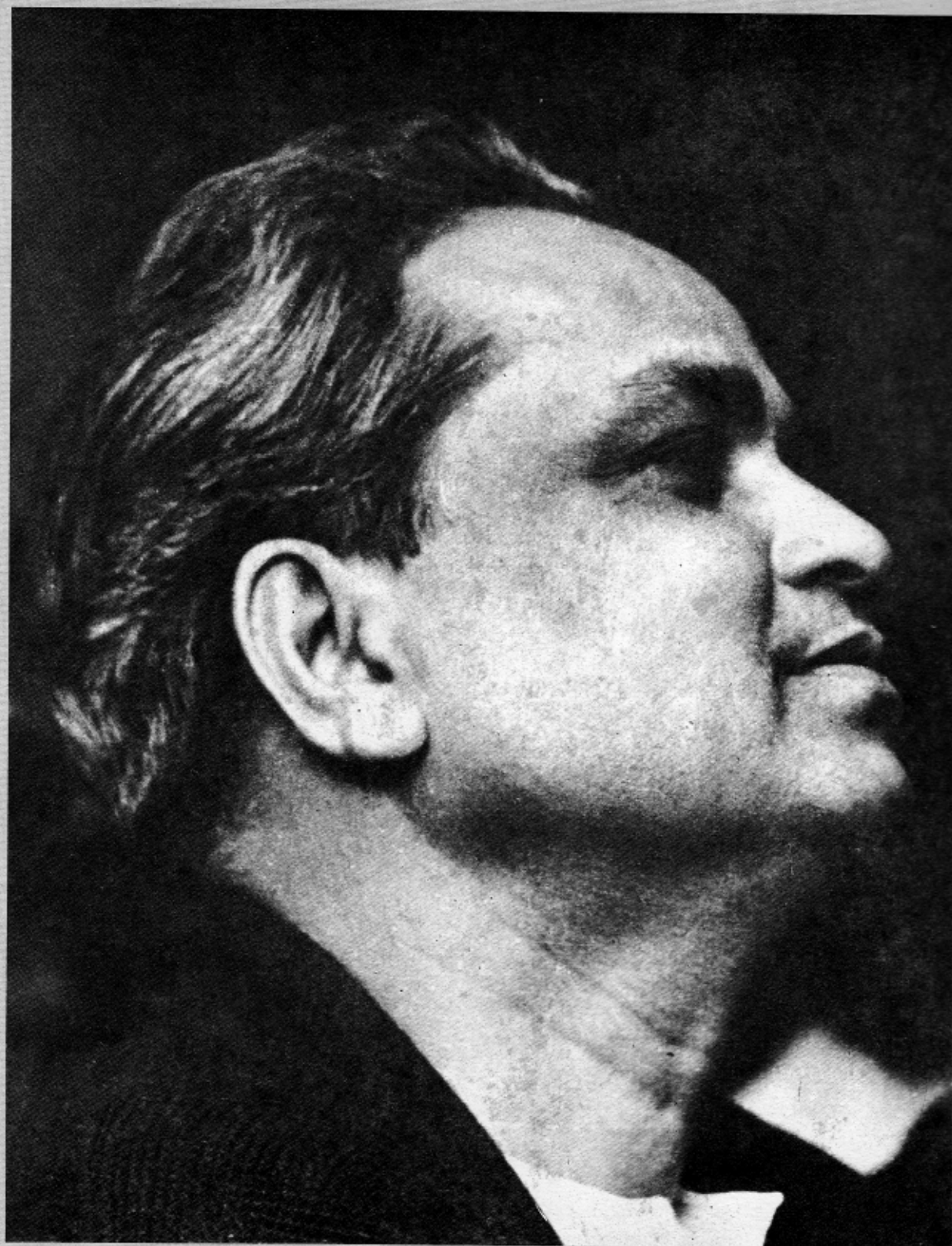
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THE EYE NO.2 MARCH-APRIL 1992







WE DEDICATE THIS ISSUE TO

**KUMAR GANDHARVA**

*The world of music mourns the departure of an institution. An institution that grew in the most unusual circumstances; an institution that caused the most intriguing, path-breaking innovations that took Indian classical music to greater heights; an institution that explored the cosmic space of art for sixty one years and became one with it on January twelfth, nineteen ninety two.*

*Kumarji, the innovator, was inspired by Kumarji, the searcher; since his mind did not rest for too long on any established style. He seemed to be in the quest for something within the realms of the various 'gharana' traditions, but something that also went beyond them all. Something, which when crystallised, would be his own. Yet, his search was instinctive, intuitive. His response to the influences of his early life was his innovative creativity. This, clubbed with his inclination towards the lyrical content of music, made him the most loved, the most disliked and the most controversial exponent of Hindustani music.*

*Kumarji's rendition was a manifestation of his quest for music in its totality. His plaintive, imploring 'bhajans', his joyous singing of the Gita quartet, and the painful romance of his Meera 'bhajans' are but some of the examples of his musical search for that intangible, elusive truth-the search for the right 'swara', the right mood, the right chord. The listener was compelled to wander with him on a journey across the musical universe.*

*Kumarji, the musician will always be remembered. With him ends one of the most significant eras of Hindustani music. He shall be greatly missed by classical aficionados and folk fans, the old and the young, connoisseurs and lay people. While the mortal remains of Kumar Gandharva are consigned to history, his music will resound in our hearts forever.*

SHARADA RAMANATHAN







Dear Editor,

● I am delighted to see the first issue of THE EYE. I have been sharing the concern of many others, like yourself, about the danger of cultural suicide by many nations. This has been happening fast in affluent countries. Often, the suicide is not conscious. It is by default, ignorance and insensibility. The obliteration of cultural heritage is more of a threat to developing countries, as they are drawn into the western paradigm of development. We in India have a great responsibility to ourselves, future generations of Indians, cultures linked to Indian history and, indeed the world, to preserve and enrich our heritage. This is quite consistent with development.

It warms one's heart to see the emergence of a word movement, through THE EYE, with the initiative of yourself and your close associates, and a widening network of support. It is marvellous to read meaningful messages to youth about Sanskrit and Tamil; Panchatantra and Tirukkural; poetry and drama; development and environment; dance and music - all between two covers.

I wish and pray for boundless success for the magazine and the movement,

**M.B. ATHREYA**  
A-28, Chitranjan Park

*A magazine's life is its readers. Take them away and what's the whole point? We want to know what you feel about THE EYE. Also your analysis and interpretation of the articles. Send us your letters with your name, address and occupation. Good letters will be published in this page.*

Dear Editor,

● Thank you for the first issue of THE EYE, and let me congratulate you and your team. As an ardent campaigner for the protection of organic existence I think such a magazine is urgently needed in our times. Thanks for publishing the piece on the Tandwa Super Thermal Power Station. The STPP was to be built at an estimated 2500 crore. It may again be situated within the North Karanpura Valley where a rare prehistoric strata including rock paintings, stone tools, dolmens, etc. have been found recently. We are in the fight to stop twenty coal mines being started by the Central Coalfield Limited which will destroy the environment through extracting 29 million tonnes of coal annually at a displacement of 400 hectare per million tonnes in the first phase of exploitation, and 7 h.a. per m.t. thereafter.

If we achieve the total protection of our forests and agricultural fields, no matter what the cost is, how significant the gain or insignificant the bases it will be worthwhile. The idea is in the principle that what we seek to protect is the source of life. In helping the awareness of this need to protect, I congratulate you.

**Bulu Imam,**  
'The Grove,' Hazaribagh,  
Bihar.

Dear Editor,

● It was really refreshing to go through THE EYE which was gifted to me by a close friend. What one is trying to do is to use our own culture as a vehicle of change. But there are limitations in expressions of every culture. For instance, in India, there is no concept of collective liberation, only personal "nirvanas" are possible, while in Islam and Christian Culture, the concept of revolution and "Jihad" came about without the understanding of the limitless inner. So, they believe in the limitless eco-techno-material growth process and frequent sexual changes to provide a sense of movement.

To live under the illusion that we can live with a certain identity is never going to be a "soul"ution. We live in a global market, and if faith in the human unlimited has to take place, then it has to be a composite faith which includes the West, the East, the tribal and above all, the woman and child. For, the woman and child are 80% of every society.

It really does seem that all one's friends are either settled in P.h.d's or U.S universities and just about no young person seems to be taking the initiative like the child who saw the naked king said so.

I wish you luck and success with THE EYE.

**Sunny Narang,**  
4A, Pocket C, Siddharta Extension  
New Delhi-110014.

Dear Editor,

● I was extremely happy to learn about your new journal. When I saw the cover and the article on Kutiyattam I was even more pleased. This is certainly a much neglected art form. Several years ago when I was in Kerala attending a seminar at Kottayam, Prof Anandamurthy arranged a performance of Kutiyattam for us. I never forgot it. It seemed to me to be one of the most powerful art forms of traditional India and I wondered why I had not seen it before. It is true, as Safina Oberoi points out in her article, that most audiences would find this form too lengthy and demanding, especially if one was not familiar with Sanskrit or Malayalam. However, it should not be allowed to fade into oblivion because of this. As Spic-Macay has rightly understood the need to create and train audiences, I wonder if this form could be, to begin with, presented somewhat differently. It could be shortened, for one thing, and also it would need to be carefully introduced by someone who could sensitively point out the characteristic features of the form and explain them. This might give some encouragement to the artists and performers of Kutiyattam as it must be very discouraging for them to feel that they have lost their audience.

The other articles in this issue indicate a wide scope within the format of the Indian art scene. I wish you success in your venture and look forward to your next issues.

**Francine E. Krishna**  
R-9, University Campus  
Jaipur-302004.



*Dear Friend,*

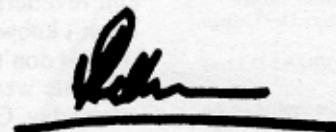
*The theme of the issue is Consumerism. By its very nature, the topic is open to endless speculation and debate. There is no denying that it is the religion of today and like all religions, their tenets must be studied, understood and interpreted.*

*Here, we look at this rather 'problematic religion' more philosophically. Some of our senior writers have contributed willingly.*

*The craze for acquisition alone impels man today. This impulse is overt in most cases, but very subtle and often unnoticed in others. Naturally, its goodbye excellence, hello mediocrity. The raison-d'être of work has changed and targets have acquired a new meaning. Is this new religion, paradoxically enough, formulating the death of the spirit? The spirit seems to wander in agony as it collides painfully with cluttered spaces. Spaces filled with our last mad bid for happiness.*

*The caterpillar consumer emerges - a small person, caught in a small world of greed, aggression, selfishness and loneliness. Shall we ever see*

*"Tall people, sun-crowned, who live above the fog in public duty and private thinking?"*





## MAGAZINE

## CO-ORDINATORS

Dr. A.B. Solepure, 2/14 J, Hospital Complex Campus, Byculla, Bombay-400008

Archana Raghavan, Gokul, T.D. Road, Cochin-682001

Sonya De Souza, Ashiana, La Mural Colony, Dona Paula, Goa-403004

Saloni Gandhi, Nirant, 2222/C Talaja Road, Bhavnagar-364002

Anand Acharya, D3/131 Boys Hostel, Walchand College of Engg., Vishrambagh, Sangli-416415,

Manjushri Gurjar, 9, Ayodhya So, Market Yard Road, Pune-41103799

Ajit Kumar, 44 Sapphire Hostel, Rec Trichy, Trichy-620015

Vasant Kulkarni, 768/21 Bhagyashri, 10th Cross, Bhagya Nagar, Belgaum-590006

K.P. Srinivasan, Rishi Valley School, Rishi Valley-517352

Chitra Rao, 109 Kailash Park Colony, Indore-452001

Ranjan Maheshwari, Lecturer, Dept of Elec Engg., Kota College, Kota.

Anand Rai, R1/Rajasthan University, Prof flats, Jaipur

Sanjeev Agarwal, 2-DHA-I-Vigyan Nagar, Kota-5.

Sujata Govind, 420-Curie House, Jipmer, Pondicherry.

Prof S.B. Kulkarni, Dept of E and C, KLE Society's College of Engg & Tech,

Udaynbaug, Belgaum-590006.

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Kumud Kumar Das, A-3 (Central) Doranda, Ranchi-834002.

Father M.C. George, Principal, Don Bosco School, Guwahati-781001

Sumanta Dey, C-5, Chanderlek, 178-A, Mukherjee Road, Calcutta-26

Binita Pandya, B-11, Sushma Society, NR, Hindu Milan Mandir, Sonifolia, Surat-395001.

Ahish Athwale, B-17, Ima Hostels, P.Box No. 60, IRMA, Anand-388001.

Kalyani Dike, 53/8 Prem Nagar, Indore-452004.

Archana H. Gore, Bhagya Nagar, Belgaum

Vikas Monga, 31, Pratap Colony, Model Gram, Ludhiana-141002

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Gautam Kaul, R.N.26, Hostel L.C.T.IET, Patiala-1470001

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R.P. Kalra, Lecturer, Dev College, Hoshiarpur

Manisha Lath, 3018/35-D, Chandigarh-160022.

Upala Ghosh, C/o Prof. M. Ghosh, New Dak Bangalow Road, Patna-800001

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## SANJULA SHARMA

*Why must I catch a falling star*

*Why hold on to a dying dream*

*The way the cookie crumbles*

*Is the way it'll always be.*

Thus flew my pen as I sat dejected on my forlorn bed. Nothing was right. Or was everything wrong? The world was topsy turvy. I could imagine the globe movin' round, movin' round... a gamut of rotations only enhancing the sense of displacement and fragmentation. What were life-incidents, thoughts or incongruities in the face of this tumbling jigsaw?

A disjointed world. Contradictions visible everywhere, looming large on my mind like scorpions on the arid sand. For instance, that morning cup of tea. A beverage that refreshes and certainly does not inebriate. Then why my dulled sense? A kind of lethargy incapacitating my limbs? An opiated stance that would have Bacchic revellers staring agape? I don't know.

Just don't know why my thoughts were cloudy on a sunny day. Or why a dusky mood settled on a morning brow. Why couldn't someone switch that blasted radio off? "La isla bonita", an island in the sun - did Madonna find it, did you?

# MOODY BLUES AND MADONNA

Nice enough voice but not Hawaiian. A voice fashioned for a 20 million show. And the applause, the encores. Today you, tomorrow someone else. Everywhere the same story.

Hackneyed stuff, all. Like the Bollywood yarns bedazzling the wide-eyed and escapist fools. Glamour. Oomph. Calf love, undying promises... a rose garden depicted so cleverly you never saw the thorns. Packed shows, coffee, popcorn. Pure fantasy or starved dreams?

Dreams, sweet dreams. Fashioned by advertisements that ensnare the weak, the gullible. A yacht, balmy winds, pretty girls and what have you... a cigarette ad. Great till you see the statutory warning. Svelte models luring les vulnerables to an enticing world. So what if the froth girl prefers Thumbs Up? Or the Liril one, Camay? It's all in the game. Like those Modistone tyres that promise to take you home safely. Unless you're in a DTC bus. Or a Maruti 1000 cruising 100 kmph on a crowded highway.

Incompatibility again. The grimy, sweaty mass packed like sardines in a precarious bus, peering longingly at a sleek Benz. Can hold six but the suave tycoon prefers a wider berth... more space to ponder on the next million. And so the gap grows. High-rise and the huts, beggar and the prince, the laughter and the pain. A swaggering mean, no meeting ground. What is

the just, the bad, the good?

I only know my mind is overwrought by the sultry heat of confusion. No cool havens soothe away blistering thoughts that hammer incessantly (was that the porter at Hell's gate?) Is it a heat stroke, I wonder, that catapults me face to face with the question of my own identity?

Superb posture of indolence, vacant eyes, crazy thoughts jostling for supremacy... a being caught up in the vortex of existentialism. Did I believe in myself? Was I because I was? Vacuities, mundane philosophy.

How much to ponder? If something, anything, happened, it would break the monotony of easy existence. Even the rains would do. They'd make things colder. And then we can search for the heat. Those moody blues. And with it the devil's own dark thoughts. That makes me wonder why....



Sanjula Sharma, 27, is a post-graduate from Jadavpur University, Calcutta. She has worked for 'The Telegraph' and is now a freelance Journalist based in Delhi.



# CHASING THE DRAGON

## IN QUEST OF THE "HIGH" LIFE.

C.B.MUTHAMMA

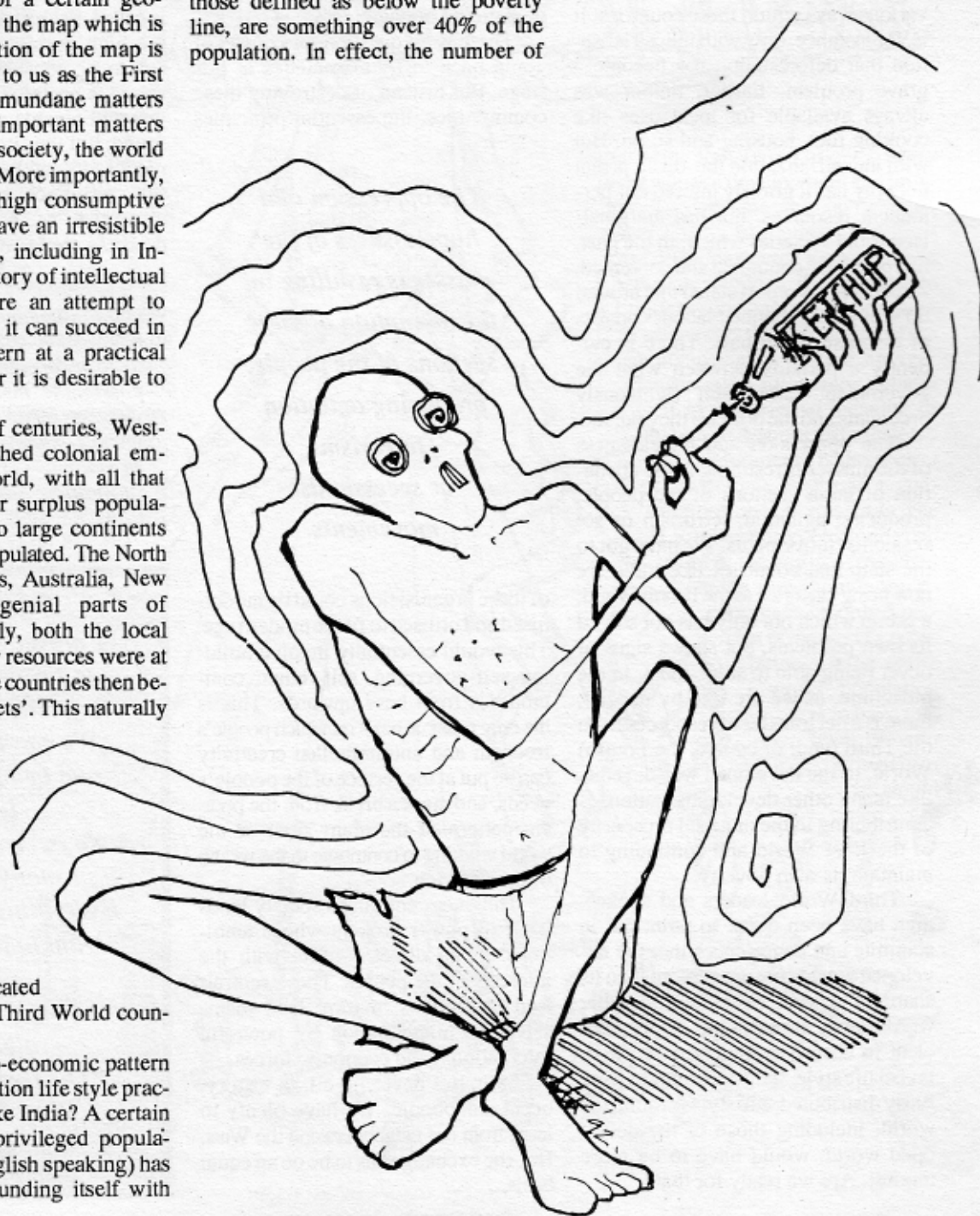
**W**e live in an age when the whole world appears to have accepted the dictates of a certain geographical section on the map which is alien to us. This section of the map is what is now known to us as the First World. From more mundane matters like dress to more important matters like the structure of society, the world tries to follow them. More importantly, the 'good life', the high consumptive pattern appears to have an irresistible attraction. Nowhere, including in India, with its long history of intellectual achievement is there an attempt to examine whether a) it can succeed in emulating this pattern at a practical level and b) whether it is desirable to do so.

Over a couple of centuries, Western Europe established colonial empires across the world, with all that these implied. Their surplus population was exported to large continents that were sparsely populated. The North and South Americas, Australia, New Zealand and congenial parts of Africa. Consequently, both the local population and their resources were at their disposal. These countries then became 'captive markets'. This naturally gave the rulers a head start in both the industrial and technological revolutions, and their supremacy in economic terms was established. This is a process that cannot be replicated by India and other Third World countries.

Is an alien socio-economic pattern and a high consumption life style practical in a country like India? A certain proportion of the privileged population (most often English speaking) has succeeded in surrounding itself with

the appurtenances of 'the good life'. But after four decades of independence, the numbers of the abjectly poor, those defined as below the poverty line, are something over 40% of the population. In effect, the number of

these sub-subsistence level people is larger than our total population at the





time of independence. There is a steep growth in crime of all kinds, from bride-burning to burglary, murder and kidnapping for ransom, mostly by those who seek short cuts to consumptive prosperity. Governmental power, whether political, bureaucratic, police or otherwise, is also seen as a prime instrument for amassing wealth. In plain language, there is widespread corruption in high places.

The economic and cultural intervention of the North in life styles of Third World countries manifests in various ways within these countries. It is, for instance, only with industrialisation that deforestation has become a grave problem. Earlier, timber was always available for local uses like cooking fuel, housing and so on. But with industrialization the result is that not only has it gravely injured our permanent resources, but has marginalised tribal societies which, in the past, had been self-contained and contented. A recent press report stated that around 80% of India's bonded labour consists of dispossessed tribals. There is evidently a paradox between what the government rather self-righteously proclaims and the policies they pursue.

The oppression and hopelessness of the masses is resulting in the alienation of large sections of the people, producing agitation, terrorism or secessionist movements. We have got to the state that countries like India are now being classified as the Fourth World; a group which not only has not solved its own problems, but shows signs of never being able to solve them. In the meantime, as we are told by experts, there is a net transfer of resources from the Third (and, of course, the Fourth) World, to the developed world. India, like many other developing nations is contributing to the material prosperity of the First World and continuing to maintain its own poverty.

Third World leaders and spokesmen have been quick to point out in summits and conferences that the developed world consumes more than its share of natural resources. In other words, what the earth has is not sufficient to ensure to the entire world, a lavish life style. If these resources were fairly distributed, life styles around the world, including those of the developed world, would have to be more modest. Are we ready for that?

Quite apart from these practical problems, we should weigh the desirability of such a high consumptive life-style, which usually results in Peter being robbed to pay Paul. It is imperative that a new model has to be constructed, which balances human needs and nature's capacity. Many tribal societies have used this model for centuries. A salient feature of theirs is the 'commonness' of property as opposed to 'individualness'. Therefore, economic, social and emotional security was everyone's birthright. They worked on patterns of democracy.

There is no question, of course, of going back to tribal societies at this stage. But instead of destroying these communities, the essential principles

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of these organisations could be modernised and utilised to fit the modern age. This would essentially involve building self-governing, self-reliant communities from base upwards. This is the only possible basis on which people's freedom and untrammelled creativity can be put at the service of the people's needs, and mark a break from the present pattern of the many poor of the world working to contribute to the wealth of the few rich.

The over-centralised society lends itself to power brokers whose ambitions are in direct conflict with the interests of the people. These centralised institutions in turn, lend themselves to manipulation by powerful international and economic forces.

India has never, in all its history, been xenophobic. We have plenty to learn from our neighbours and the West. But the exchange has to be on an equal basis.

India can explain to those concerned that Man is not the *master* of the universe. He cannot equate his growth to acquisition alone. Civilisation, in the ultimate analysis, means the acquisition of discipline and self restraint, both by individuals and communities, providing for real inner growth. Without this, aggression in many forms—military, political, economic, cultural and psychological become inevitable. Often, these many forms of aggression are interlinked and mutually sustaining. The present assumption that what is called, *the standard of living* namely, the high consumption pattern of life has to be constantly and indefinitely raised is open to question. A humane, just and tenable alternative has to be found, but the first step is for India to recover its intellectual autonomy and self assurance before our national memories of a different path to progress are irrevocably lost. ●

*C.B.Muthamma is the first career woman ambassador of India to go on foreign missions. She is passionate in her struggle in various causes which makes an impact on the country she loves so much.*

*Illustration: Aditi Roychoudhary*

*"Forever conditioned  
to believe that we  
can't live  
We can't live here  
and be happy with  
less  
So many riches, so  
many souls  
Everything we see we  
want to possess..."*

*STING, From the  
album,  
"The Dream of the  
Blue Turtles"*

# CONSUMING THE FUTURE

VANDANA SHIVA



To "consume" originally meant to destroy, to pillage, to subdue, to exhaust. Until very recently, it only had negative connotations.

Today, it is fast becoming the reason for life on earth, the reason for citizenship, the reason for states and for super states. To consume more and more is rapidly being defined as the essence of being human. Human nature, it is said, is essentially greedy. But this construction of "human nature" is a very recent one. It has been manufactured along with the industrial commodities for which markets need to be found. The greedy human then becomes the socially engineering. We are not born consumers - we are made and shaped into consumers - puppets in the advertising clutches of irresponsible and hazardous industries. The orgy of consumption that was first unleashed in our country through development and is now being unleashed through economic "liberalisation" will have a serious impact on the environment, on our democratic structure, our culture and our economy.

The contemporary environmental crisis is directly related to the high consumption life styles of northern industrialised countries which are

now being transferred to our country in the name of development and progress. To consume as much energy, paper, CFC's, hamburgers as Americans do is considered the measure of being "developed". But, inherent to limitless consumption as a measure of progress is the destruction of the environmental base of our survival. Consumption ultimately reduces itself to the original meaning of "that which destroys and exhausts."

"Development" is the project of modelling everyone's consumption on U.S. standards. The U.S. is currently consuming one third of the world's fossil fuel energy even though Americans make up only 5 percent of the world's population. If the entire world population was to have that level of consumption, we would need six



planets instead of one. The awareness that consumerism as the contemporary cult is environmentally non-sustainable can lead to two environmental options. The first option is to break away from that cult - to treat consumerism not as a symptom of liberation, but as a symptom of bondage, not as an indicator of social disease. It involves living within nature's limits, and treating the recognition and respect of those limits as the essence of being human and being free. A corollary of everyone within nature's limits is that everyone has access to means of survival, and nobody is denied the right to life. Ecology in this sense provides the basis of democracy.

The second option of resolving the contradiction between high consumption levels and environmental limits is to preserve the consumption levels, but only for a few. If everyone cannot have access to the high consumption life styles of the west due to resource limits, then it is the poor people of the Third World and not those lifestyles that must be sacrificed. The philosophy of "triage" - of getting rid of the "weak", for the survival of the "strong" is the logical expression of a cult based on consumerism as the religion of industrial society - the sacred which cannot be touched. Many outcomes follow from treating consumerism as a modernist/fundamentalist religion that must be preserved at all costs. Firstly, as in fundamentalism, those who are outside the fold must be exterminated. The presumption of "triage" of coercive population control in the Third World are strategies of extermination of those whose only fault is that their poverty prevents them from participating in the orgy of consumerism.

"Population explosions" have always emerged as images created by modern patriarchy in periods of increasing social and economic polarisations. Malthus saw populations exploding at the dawn of the industrial era. The next major period of concern with over-population occurred between World War I and II when certain groups were viewed as leading to the deterioration of the human genetic stock. After World War II, these nations where unrest threatened U.S. access to resources and markets became known as the "population powder kegs". The latest round of concern with over population comes

with environment concern. Popularised through the concern for the survival of the planet, the picture of the world's hungry hordes have made population control appear acceptable and even imperative.

What this focus on numbers hides is the unequal access to resources people have and the unequal environmental burden they put on the earth. In global terms, a drastic decrease of population in the poorest areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America would make an impact immeasurably smaller than a decrease of only 5 percent in present consumption levels of the ten richest countries. The dominant processes at work, however, want to protect the wasteful "way of life" at any cost, and think of the poor only when it comes to accusing them of being burdens that should be treated as expendable.

The second serious outcome of preserving consumerism at any cost is that it makes diverse cultures dispensable. As consumerism takes on, more and more, the semblance of a religion - by becoming the only legitimate framework of morality that goes hand in hand with the rule of the market; Macdonalds, Pepsi and Blue Jeans become the sacraments, the holy communion. These ultimate symbols of a consumer culture destroy all cultures. In a very material sense, consumer

culture is based on the consumption of nature and all cultures. It is this aspect of consumerism as predatory and inherently destructive that creates the imperative to go beyond it. And a post-consumerist world has much to learn from cultures and religions that have thought and lived sustainably because they valued the virtue of living within limits.

*Vandana Shiva is an Indian physicist, philosopher and feminist. She is the author of "Staying Alive, Women, Ecology and Development" and is working on a new book, "The Violence of the green Revolution". She is actively involved in the Chipko movement. She is now Director of the Research Foundation for Science Technology and National Research Policy. She has a Ph.D in the Philosophy of Science from the University of Western Ontario and has since worked with the Indian Institute of Management and the United Nations Environmental Programmes.*

*Illustration: Aditi Roychoudhary*



# M COLUMN MALCOLM'S

One of my most enduring memories as a child was travelling to visit my grandmother in London. I cannot pinpoint the year with any accuracy, but the bitter chill of that winter's day suggests it was 1949 - round about my sixth birthday. I vividly recall being overawed and fearful at the amount of destruction which remained after the Second World War. A few months later in the summer of that year, I was aware of the grass and willow herb bursting through the cracks of our ruined city, symbols of growth and renewal. However, my infant sensibilities were too young to grasp the fact that economic growth and renewal had become the universal panacea about to sweep Europe, and raise our material standards of living beyond the wildest dreams of avarice.

Amidst the bombed wreckage of former city streets, the numerous clusters of temporary housing (known as prefabs) gave many Londoners their first encounter with modern living conditions. Indoor lavatories and bathrooms were standard fittings in these temporary dwellings. In contrast to the reeking slums bombed during the war, these overcrowded little prefabs were comparatively luxurious. In addition, the war years had brought large sections of the community into contact with American troops whose abundant supplies of cigarettes, zippo lighters, and nylon stockings offered an alluring glimpse of a consumer society. This message was reinforced throughout the fifties - Victor Lebow wrote in the *New York Journal of Retailing*: "our enormously productive economy demands that we make consumption a way of life, that we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfactions in consumption... We need things consumed, burned up, worn out, replaced and discarded at an ever growing rate".

Here in Britain, the consumer boom slowly gathered momentum. In 1951, The Festival of Britain, 'Skylon' dominated the city horizon. This new momentum heralded not only a celebration of economic recovery after the war, but a new mood of liberalism in the arts and daily life. Europe's shattered



## CONSUMED BY CONSUMERISM

MALCOLM BALDWIN

economy began to grow at unprecedented rates, and wealth began to permeate through to all levels of society. Within a decade, Prime Minister Harold Macmillan summed up the mood of the country when he coined the phrase "You've never had it so good!"

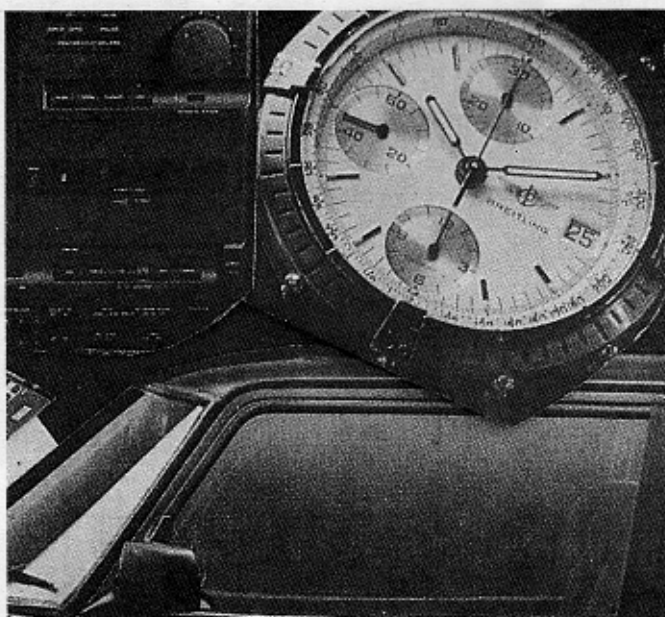
In material terms he was right, and within thirty years, the consumer society dominated every aspect of life. The

last census showed that 98% of British households owned a refrigerator, and a television set. 85% of households now have a washing machine. On average, there is at least one car per household in the UK. Homes are stuffed with luxurious furniture and labour-saving devices, while 30% of the population travel abroad for their holidays. New consumer durables like video record-



ers, home computers, and personal stereos have become commonplace items in high street shops. Even the structure of the marketplace itself has changed, and now about a quarter of our gross domestic product (GDP) is devoted simply to consumer services. Travel agencies, life assurance, catering and hotel accommodation had an exponential growth rate of 6.4 per cent throughout the eighties. However, there has been a price to pay for our good fortune.

To-day, if I choose to wander around London (which is seldom) I am no longer awed by the deliberate destruction of a war-torn city, but by the mindless destructiveness of the consumer revolution. The streets are no longer strewn with bomb craters, but the visible wreckage of our industrial way of life. Litter is everywhere, traffic fumes pervade the atmosphere, while over consumption and poverty exist cheek by jowl. Luxury cars and expensive lifestyles isolate people from the realities of drug addiction, crime, and hopelessness. The senses are constantly assaulted by the gross inequality of a society where increased wealth is supposed to trickle down as a benefit to all. Within the gleaming palaces of material consumption I can eat strawberries in mid-winter or dine on exotic Indonesian food to the sound of Latin-American guitars. These days, the scarce commodities are fresh air, clean water, and peace of mind. The desire for shining consumer durables, is being replaced by the need to escape the increasingly thronged condition of modern technological living. Sony Walkmans, fashionable clothes, and Coca-Colas in the fridge exact a heavy price. In Western Europe and America the signs are becoming visible. In the rest of the world, they are glaringly obvious.



*Within the gleaming palaces of material consumption I can eat strawberries in mid-winter or dine on exotic Indonesian food to the sound of Latin-American guitars.*

The fact is that 20% of the world's population now consumes 80% of its resources, and we in the North have derived enormous material benefits from plundering the resources of the developing world. In theory, the engine of economic expansion should be fuelled by an insatiable appetite for consumer products which, in a free market place, creates wealth. Given the passage of

time, and minimum interference from governments, the wealth thus created should trickle down through all nations at all levels of society. It's now forty years since the Festival of Britain erected its icons to economic development, and it is clear that the nation of beneficent capitalism works only within strictly limited boundaries, and has appalling social and environmental costs. UNICEF estimates that about half a million children die each year as a direct consequence of Third World debt. Half the world's population does not have access to clean drinking water, and according to World Bank statistics, some 800 million people live in dire poverty.

The Marxist model of state controlled economic development is also flawed. The collapse of the Russian Empire has vividly demonstrated the folly of their industrial programme since

the second world war. Some 50 million people in Russia suffer grievously from industrial, chemical and nuclear pollution. In Poland, the River Vistula flowing from Warsaw to Gdansk is so polluted that its water can no longer be used even by industry. Such examples can be multiplied all over the globe with increasing regularity, and it is now quite clear that industrial expansion is pushing nature beyond the limits of her endurance.

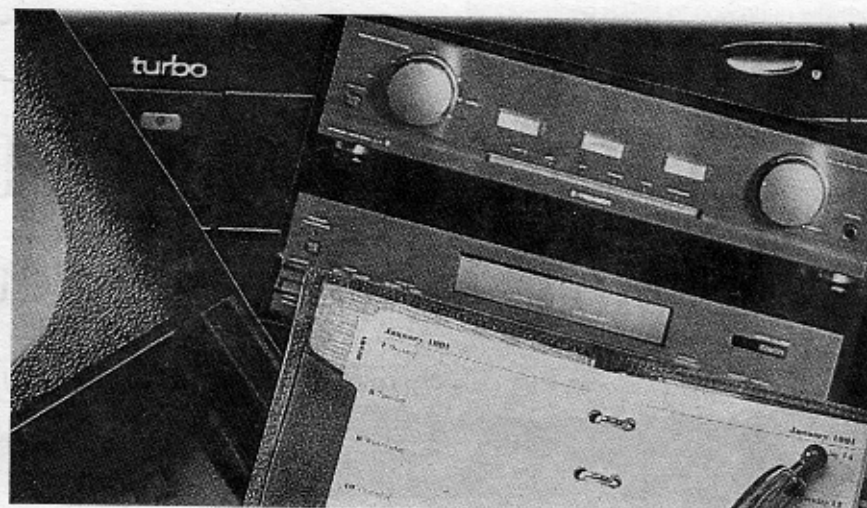
Yet, in spite of all evidence to the contrary, politicians and economists persist with the notion of infinite economic expansion in a finite world. Clearly the model does not work, but in President Bush's "new world order", country after country is blindly embracing the free market economy without a thought for the quality of life or the well being of future generations. Doubtless, there will be some marginal short term successes like Malaysia, where there is currently an economic growth rate of ten per cent per annum,

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(a 3% growth rate means a doubling of production every 25 years). In cutting down their rain forests, and aping western style industrial expansion, not only are they destroying countless species of living things forever, but they are plundering the real wealth of that country which if managed in a sustainable way, might be capable of feeding unborn generations.

These days, it is only necessity which takes me to my capital city. It used to be said when I was a boy that "the streets of London were paved with gold". Now it is hard to see the pavement through the debris of our throwaway consumer society. It is quite clear that the era of unlimited consumerism is coming to an end, and new economic models will be needed to take the world into the twenty first century. What we need to realise as quickly as we can is that present ideas about economic development are neither sustainable nor in the long term desirable. In the final analysis, all the consumer goods in the world will not compensate for an impoverished planet where one fifth of humanity lives in conditions of grinding poverty.

I have been lucky enough to live through the most prosperous forty years of Western European history, and as



the threat of global warming, ozone depletion, overpopulation and famine become present realities, I remain cautiously optimistic. At this late stage new ideas are emerging which might contribute towards a fairer distribution of wealth. The green movement all over the world is beginning to address the problem in a number of diverse ways, and it is clear that given the spiritual commitment and political will, ordinary men and women can create a sustainable future for us all. If they fail, all of us will be consumed by the monster of our own creation.

*Malcolm Baldwin is a gifted teacher, writer and a dedicated environmentalist. Born in the U.K., he has a B.Ed degree from the University of Sussex. He has worked in Theatre and as Film Editor mainly for BBC T.V. He has been cameraman and director for several BBC productions. He is deeply committed to organizations such as Green Peace, Friends of the Earth, Environmental Investigation Agency and has produced environmental educational material.*

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# BEHIND THE VAUDEVILLE-ETHICS IN ADVERTISING

## MADISON SQUARE IN A ROUND HOLE

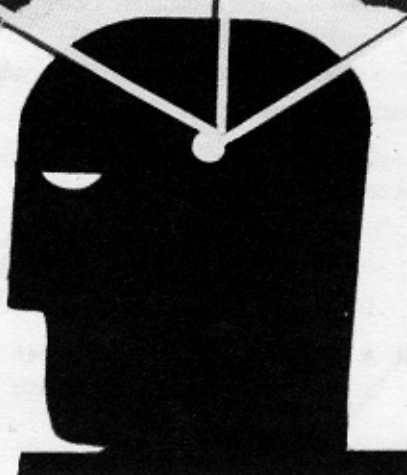
SUROOP GOPALAKRISHNAN

*Some Faces Are Simply U*

People think you're choosy.  
But you're just being  
particular about details.

Being choosy, as you know,  
has an advantage.

**“W**e sell, or else.....”  
David Ogilvy.  
Every marketing manager around the globe knows and respects the awesome powers of advertising. In a world where sales and profits are the moving forces of society, promotion could mean the difference between life and death. Media promotion being undoubtedly the high priest of all promotional means, the marketing man advertises, advertises and advertises.



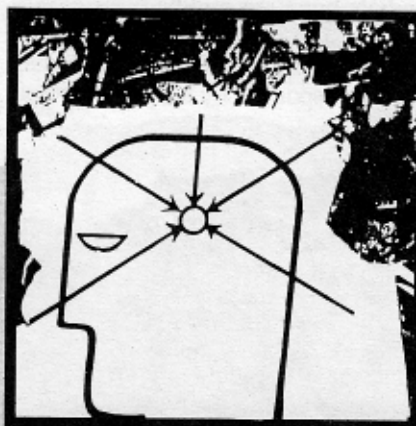
Now that the 'profit motive' is no longer an ugly phrase in the Indian scenario, it would be unwise not to examine the moral standing of advertising as an industry or institution. The primary objective of any advertiser is to sell. Hence, it is not unreasonable to assume that social concerns are only peripheral to his interest. On the one hand, advertising provides valuable service to society informing consumers about products and services, while on the other, it influences the independent thinking of the consumer and

attempts to change his behaviour. It is in this sense that the issue of discipline in advertising is to be considered.

Advertising today has grown into a thousand crore plus industry, from modest beginnings not so long ago. The industry has a healthy growth rate of around 17%. Capitalized billings of 88 major metro-based agencies alone comes in to around 720 crores. Translated in to plain English, this implies a persuasive effort worth Rs.720 crores from agencies who advertise on a national scale and influence national consumer behaviour in a significant way. Market noise has also increased tremendously over the last five years, with hundreds of new advertisements being released every year. Television, radio and the print media are the main vehicles of promotion in the Indian context. Newer methods of promotion such as personal selling and direct mailing are also making inroads into the Indian markets.

The picture that emerges is one of growing chaos at the market place. Advertising agencies are shedding inhibitions and adopting any method available to cut through the media clatter and grab a piece of the consumer's ever-wandering attention. Under the circumstances, it would be unnatural if ad agencies did not throw ethical and moral considerations overboard in making themselves heard through the communication explosion. The man on the street however, is blissfully unaware of these conspiracies to take over his mind and convert it into a fertile colony with unlimited profit potential. It is in this context that the emergence of a high profile watchdog agency becomes the need of the hour.

The first ethical point which should



*The man on the street however, is blissfully unaware of these conspiracies to take over his mind and convert it into a fertile colony with unlimited profit potential. It is in this context that the emergence of a high profile watchdog agency becomes the need of the hour.*

be examined is that of deception whether it be wilful and blatant or subtle and understated. Deception appears in many forms, some of which are common enough to merit discussion.

Is an advertisement which uses false information or which leads to false conclusions ethically correct if the eventual product satisfies the consumer in terms of the benefits he expects?

Even marketing guru, Ted Levitt, has nodded an emphatic 'yes' as an answer to this issue. Think again. The consumer is lured into buying the product in the first place through false or misleading information. He is the victim of a marketplace hypnosis act, which is totally unethical.

CASE: Brand X of toilet soap has just been launched. The ad proclaims in a not too modest manner that the soap contains ingredient Y which, of course, does all sorts of miraculous things to your malnourished skin. What it does not mention is that there are brands A, B, and C in the marketplace which also contain Y and that brand X has nothing new to offer. The discerning consumer (a scarce commodity) is able to sift

the hype and draw out the strand of truth. But the remaining millions go out and buy X as if it is their last chance to save their withering skins.

CASE: A microwave oven is advertised. The proud mother-homemaker role model stands, surrounded by pulaos, kormas and succulent chicken. The copy screams that there is no limit to the culinary heights which the said oven assists in achieving.

In her dining room, Mrs. Bhatia, 28 and mother of two wonders why the chicken she makes never achieves the stunning visual effect of the mouth-watering red in the picture. Little does she know that the chicken in the pic-



ture is a perfect fake, coloured and doctored to precision by sharp production designers. Likewise, most food product advertisements are doctored with additives, colour processing and a wide array of tools which technology has thrust into wrong hands. Ice-cream, soups, instant foods, health drinks, chocolate - in all these cases, the real thing bears little relation to the photographed product displayed in ads.

Personal care products are the greatest villains in the deception game. Facial creams, hair removers, skin care lotions, soaps, talcs..... the list is endless.

The first-person copy drools over the virtues of the moisturiser-cum-lotion. For every teenager who compares her own face with the Facial Cream Goddess, a con is executed and a product is sold.

In the area of corporate advertising and capital issue advertising, deception takes the form of misrepresentation. Many companies brandish technology transfers and collaborations which may amount to buying a few pieces of machinery from the "collaborators". Though the MRTP commission does investigate allegations of misrepresentation, there is no formalised code of conduct which regulates agencies and companies from twisting half truths to their own advantage. Many a time, as in the recent case of a leading textile manufacturer, the commission is forced to reject complaints for lack of a clear definition of misrepresentation. Selective use of information and suggestive copy in capital issue advertisements often lead investors to make wrong investments.

Offensiveness and bad taste are the other important issues which advertisers tend to neglect in their trade. To the advertiser, the human mind is a fortress under siege. The advertising army camps outside, plotting, scheming and exploring the weakness of the fortresses. As

India's booming middle class carries the flag of conspicuous consumption forward the Indian advertising industry has responded by adapting ("copy-

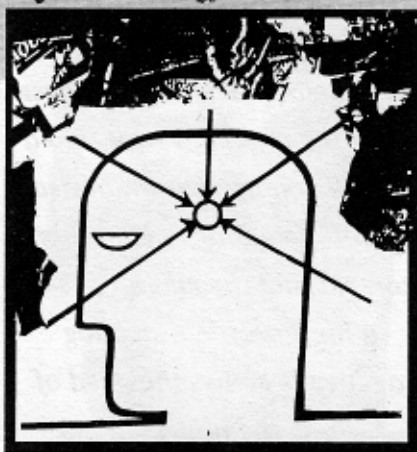
ing" would be a better word) trends of Western advertising (product to image to positioning etc.) The result is often a host of advertisements which are in-

sensitive to cultural and social considerations. A glaring example of bad taste is the case of the pimpled girl whose parents cannot find a good match for her until she has cleared her facial defects with a popular brand of pimple cream. Such advertisements not only spread wrong messages but also subliminally scar young minds with baseless complexes.

Does advertizing cause people to buy things they don't really need? The advertising establishment often argues, despite criticisms to the contrary, that advertising has only a limited influence on the consumer. They argue that one of the functions of advertising is to awaken sub-conscious desires. But where does one draw the line between the stimulation of a genuine latent need and the hidden promotion of conspicuous consumption? A case in point is a recent advertisement for, hold your breath, .....designer underwear for children. Do we really have to stimulate demand for such products in a country reeling under a BOP deficit, cash crunch and worst of all, millions of underprivileged children?

In a consumerist society, it is impossible to discriminate among needs. Consumption is raised to the

level of an ethic which renders superfluous all the whys and whethers. There is a singular absence of goals and society degenerates into a feeling of anonymous well-being, where every man believes himself to be affluent but is totally unaware of where his affluence should lie and does lie. In such a society, books, ice-cream, Kuchipudi and motorbikes get the same ranking. Thus conspicuous consumption has no pattern, no self-guiding mechanism. Man



THE EYE NO.2 VOL.1 MARCH-APRIL 1992

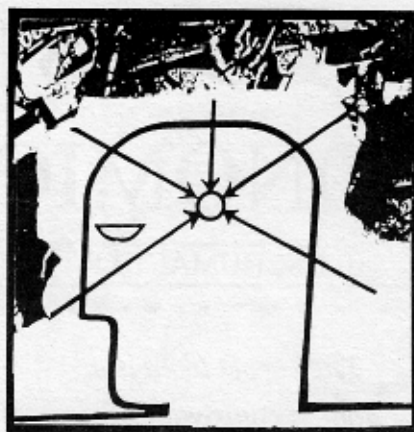
buys objects independently of the use he can make or wishes to make of them. It is this consumption ethic which modern day advertising preaches and promotes. I consume, or else...has become the byline of the Indian middle class.

Advertising is more often than not accused of conditioning people, thrusting choices upon them and taking away part of their freedom. Paradoxically, the lack of direction which advertising fails to give to consumption has also thrown man into a state of unbridled liberty, in that it gives license to any form and magnitude of consumption. Advertising achieves this end by pampering the whims and fancies of the human mind. One of the more recent Japanese business aphorisms doing the rounds says that "the consumer is no longer king, he is God".

Moving away from these generic areas, some issues specific to the Indian scenario can also be identified as problem areas.

Lifestyle selling has become an accepted mode of promotion for many products ranging from cigarettes to clothing. However, what is disturbing is the fact that a substantial amount of lifestyle selling has blatantly American/European overtones. Awe of the occident is a pre-natal instinct in the Indian psyche which surfaces in all types of situations. It's the same instinct which surfaces when, on a rural train, an old village patriarch gets up from his precious seat to accommodate a European punk in a vest and bermudas and when intellectuals lap up the lecture of any mediocre occidental professor with more reverence than they would accord Sri Aurobindo. It is the same instinct which is cleverly used by the ad world when they advertise a range of products from clothing to liquor and soft drinks to cars.

It is particularly significant that all these advertisements are targeted predominantly at the young. There exists an acknowledged yuppie-nouveau riche minority in the country which idolizes consumption and for whom such a lifestyle is pre-sold. There is also a larger middle class which may be brainwashed into buying a lifestyle which is alien to it. There also exists a third class of nobodies, an amorphous mass of malleable minds which has the ability to observe what goes on around them but



*One of the more recent  
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lacks the analytical enterprise to question.

CASE: The scene: A C-grade cinema theater in a small town. The commercials are on. A helicopter arrives at a beachside resort, which is soon joined by a seaplane. A flurry of bikinis, yachts, surfboards and spray ensues. Over ample doses of nearly nude bodies, a soft drink is pushed.

The damage that such commercials do is irreversible. They aim at associating lifestyles with the products but end up selling the lifestyle itself, thus creating what may be crudely jargonised "as dissonances in the social psyche".

How subversive are Indian advertisements to the Indian mind? Do Indian ads perpetuate and reinforce subliminal messages of Western cultural superiority?

CASE: A leading national magazine. Liquor is advertised on the inside page under the guise of club soda. Pardonable? The visual shows a very Anglo-Saxon profile attired in Raj finery flanked by a very "desi" couple who look on admiringly. The ad text sells the Raj unabashedly. Raj nostalgia deteriorates to Raj worship. Message? Those were good times, chaps.....

Cultural disjunction as a corollary of homogenisation of the global marketplace is an observed social reality. It is particularly significant as India moves into the nineties with a host of multinationals on her trail. Low levels of foreign direct investment, misallocation and mismanagement of resources and indiscipline borrowing have ensured that India finds itself in deep economic crisis. The wave of economic liberalization now sweeping the country brings with it serious cultural portents. The government's recent decision to allow international brands is significant in this regard, as most international brands use campaigns which are derived from, and are in many cases, carbon copies of campaigns which have run successfully in their own countries.

Advertising has been one of the most criticized industries in recent times. The mantle of moderating and conducting the debate on advertising ethics has so far lain only with the industry pundits and media sharks. It is imperative that the ballooning middle class, especially the young, take up the debate on a much wider scale - which explains this article and why I am writing it.

*Suroop Gopalakrishnan, 25, is a Naval Architect, currently studying International Business at the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, New Delhi.*

*The Eye is a forum for young people (and others not so young!) to send in articles, short stories, poems, photographs, illustrations, cartoons etc. We look forward to receiving them.*



# BUDDHIST ECONOMICS

E.F.SCHUMACHER

**I**t is clear that Buddhist economics must be very different from the economics of modern materialism, since the Buddhist sees the essence of civilisation not as a multiplication of wants.

"Right Livelihood" is one of the requirements of the Buddha's Noble Eight fold path. It is clear, therefore, that there must be such a thing as Buddhist economics.

Buddhist countries have often stated that they wish to remain faithful to their heritage. So Burma, 'The New Burma', sees no conflict between religious values and economic progress. Spiritual health and material well-being are not enemies, they are natural allies. Or: we can blend successfully the religious and spiritual values of our heritage with the benefits of modern technology. Or: we Burmese have a sacred duty to conform both our dreams and our acts to our faith. This we shall ever do.

All the same, such countries invariably assume that they can model their economic development plans in accordance with modern economics, and they call upon modern economists from so called advanced countries to advise them, to formulate the policies to be pursued, and to construct the grand design for development, the Five-Year Plan or whatever it may be called. No-one seems to think that a Buddhist way of life would call for Buddhist economics, just as the modern materialist way of life has brought forth modern economics.

Economists themselves, like most specialists, normally suffer from a kind of metaphysical blindness, assuming that theirs is a science of absolute and invariable truths, without any pre-suppositions. Some go as far as to claim that economic laws are as free from 'metaphysics' or 'values' as the law of gravitation. We need not, however,

*The carpet loom is a  
tool, a contrivance for  
holding warp threads at  
a stretch for the pile to  
be woven round them by  
the craftsmen's fingers;  
but the power loom is a  
machine, and its  
significance as a  
destroyer of culture lies  
in the fact that it does  
the essentially "human"  
part of the work. The  
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human character.*



get involved in arguments of methodology. Instead, let us take some fundamentals and see what they look like when viewed by a modern economist and a Buddhist economist.

There is universal agreement that a fundamental source of wealth is human labour. Now, the modern economist has been brought up to consider 'labour' or work as little more than a necessary evil. From the point of view of the employer, it is in any case, simply an item of cost, to be reduced to a minimum if it cannot be eliminated altogether, say, by automation. From the point of view of the workman, it is a 'disutility'; to work is to make a sacrifice of one's leisure and comfort, and wages are a kind of compensation for the sacrifice. Hence the ideal from the point of view of the employer is to have output without employees, and the ideal from the point of view of the employee is to have income without employment.

The consequences of these attitudes both in theory and in practice are, of course, extremely far-reaching. If the ideal with regard to work is to get rid of it, every method that 'reduces the work load' is a good thing. The most potent method, short of automation, is the so-called 'division of labour' and the classical example is the pin factory eulogised in Adam Smith's, *Wealth of Nations*. Here, it is not a matter of ordinary specialisation, which mankind has practised from time immemorial, but that of dividing up every complete process of production into minute parts, so that the final product can be produced at great speed without anyone having had to contribute more than a totally insignificant and, in most cases, unskilled movement of his limbs.

The Buddhist point of view takes the function of work to be at least threefold: to give a man a chance to utilise and develop his faculties; to

enable him to overcome his ego-centredness by joining with other people in a common task; and to bring forth the goods and services needed for a becoming existence.

**A**gain, the consequences that flow from this view are endless. To organise work in such a manner that it becomes meaningless, boring, stultifying, or nerve-racking for the worker would be little short of criminal; it would indicate a greater concern with *goods* than with *people*, an evil lack of compassion and a soul-destroying degree of attachment to the most primitive side of this worldly existence. Equally, to strive for leisure as an alternative to work would be considered a complete misunderstanding of one of the basic truths of human existence, namely that work and leisure are *complementary* parts of the same living process and cannot be separated without destroying the joy of work and the bliss of leisure.

From the Buddhist point of view, there are, therefore, two types of mechanisation which must be clearly distinguished: one that enhances a man's skill and power and one that turns the work of man over to a mechanical slave, leaving man in a position of having to serve the slave. How to tell the one from the other? "The craftsman himself," says Ananda Coomaraswamy, a man equally competent to talk about the modern west as the ancient east, 'can always, if allowed to, draw the delicate distinction between the machine and the tool. The carpet loom is a tool, a contrivance for holding warp threads at a stretch for the pile to be woven round them by the craftsmen's fingers; but the power loom is a machine, and its significance as a destroyer of culture lies in the fact that it does the essentially *human* part of the work.' It is clear, therefore, that Buddhist economics must be very different from the economics of modern materialism, since the Buddhist sees the essence of civilisation not in a multiplication of wants but in the purification of human character. Character, at the same time, is formed primarily by a man's work. And work, properly conducted in conditions of human dignity



*From an economist's point of view, the marvel of the Buddhist way of life is the utter rationality of its pattern - amazingly small means leading to extraordinarily satisfactory results.*

and freedom, blesses those who do it and equally their products. The Indian philosopher and economist, J.C. Kumarappa sums the matter up as follows:

'If the nature of the work is properly appreciated and applied, it will stand in the same relation to the higher faculties as food is to the physical body. It nourishes and enlivens the higher man and urges him to produce the best he is capable of. It directs his free will along the proper course and disciplines the animal in him into progressive channels. It furnishes an excellent background for man to display

his scale of values and develop his personality.'

If a man has no chance of obtaining work he is in a desperate position, not simply because he lacks this nourishing and enlivening factor of disciplined work which nothing can replace. A modern economist may engage in highly sophisticated calculations on whether full employment 'pays' or whether it might be more 'economic' to run an economy at less than full employment so as to ensure a greater mobility of labour, a better stability of wages, and so forth. His fundamental criterion of success is simply the total quantity of goods produced during a given period of time. 'If the marginal urgency of goods is low', says Professor Galbraith in, *The Affluent Society*, 'then, so is the urgency of employing the last man or the last million men in the labour force.' And again, 'If... we can afford some unemployment in the interest of stability - a proposition, incidentally, of impeccably conservative antecedents - then

we can afford to give those who are unemployed the goods that enable them to sustain their accustomed standard of living.'

From a Buddhist point of view, this is standing the truth on its head by considering *goods* as more important than *people* and consumption as more important than creative activity. It means shifting the emphasis from the worker to the product of work, that is, from the human to the sub-human, a surrender to the forces of evil. The very start of Buddhist economic planning would be a planning for full employment, and the primary purpose of this would in fact be employment for everyone who needs an 'outside' job: it would not be the maximisation of employment nor the maximisation of production. To let mothers of young children work in factories while the children run wild would be as uneconomic in the eyes of a Buddhist economist as the employment of a skilled worker as a soldier in the eyes of a modern economist.

While the materialist is mainly interested in goods, the Buddhist is mainly interested in liberation. But Buddhism is 'The Middle Way' and therefore in no way antagonistic to physical well-



being. It is not *wealth* that stands in the way of liberation but the *attachment* to wealth; not the enjoyment of pleasurable things but the craving for them. The keynote of Buddhist economics, therefore, is simplicity and non-violence. From an economist's point of view, the marvel of the Buddhist way of life is the utter rationality of its pattern - amazingly small means leading to extraordinarily satisfactory results.

**F**or the modern economist this is very difficult to understand. He is used to measuring the 'standard of living' by the amount of annual consumption, assuming all the time that a man who consumes more is 'better off' than a man who consumes less. A Buddhist economist would consider this approach excessively irrational: since consumption is merely a means to human well-being, the aim should be to obtain the maximum of well-being with the minimum of consumption. Thus, if the purpose of clothing is a certain amount of temperature comfort and an attractive appearance, the task is to attain this purpose with the smallest possible effort, that is, with the smallest annual destruction of cloth and with the help of designs that involve the smallest possible input of toil. The less toil there is, the more time and strength is left for artistic creativity. It would be highly uneconomic, for instance, to go in for complicated tailoring, like the modern West, when a much more beautiful effect can be achieved by the skilful draping of uncut material. It would be the height of folly to make material so that it should wear out quickly and the height of barbarity to make anything ugly, shabby or mean. What has just been said about clothing applies equally to all other human requirements. The ownership and the consumption of goods is a means to an end, and Buddhist economics is the



*Equally, people who live in highly self-sufficient local communities are less likely to get involved in large-scale violence than people whose existence depends on world-wide systems of trade.*



human satisfactions by the optimal pattern of consumption, while the latter tries to maximise consumption by the optimal pattern of productive effort. It is easy to see that the effort needed to sustain a way of life which seeks to attain the optimal pattern of consumption is likely to be much smaller than the effort needed to sustain a drive for maximum consumption. We need not be surprised, therefore, that the pressure and strain of living is very much less in, say, Burma than it is in the United States, in spite of the fact that the amount of labour-saving machinery used in the former country is only a minute fraction of the amount used in the latter.

Simplicity and non-violence are obviously closely related. The optimal pattern of consumption, producing a high degree of human satisfaction by means of a relatively low rate of consumption, allows people to live without great pressure and strain and to fulfil the primary injunction of Buddhist teaching: 'Cease to do evil; try to do good.' As physical resources are everywhere limited, people satisfying their needs by means of a modest use of resources are obviously less likely to

be at each other's throats than people depending upon a high rate of use. Equally, people who live in highly self-sufficient local communities are less likely to get involved in large-scale violence than people whose existence depends on world-wide systems of trade.

From the point of view of Buddhist economics, therefore, production from local resources

for local needs is the most rational way of economic life, while dependence on imports from afar and the consequent need to produce for export to unknown and distant peoples is highly uneconomic and justifiable only in exceptional cases and on a small scale. Just as the modern economist would admit

systematic study of how to attain given ends with the minimum means. Modern economics, on the other hand, considers consumption to be the sole end and purpose of all economic activity, taking the factors of production - land, labour, and capital - as the means. The former, in short, tries to maximise

that a high rate of consumption of transport services between a man's home and his place of work signifies a misfortune and not a high standard of life, so the Buddhist economist would hold that to satisfy human wants from far-away sources rather than from sources nearby signifies failure rather than success. The former tends to take statistics showing an increase in the number of ton/miles per head of the population carried by a country's transport system as proof of economic progress, while to the latter - the Buddhist economist - the same statistics would indicate a highly undesirable deterioration in the pattern of consumption.

Another striking difference between modern economics and Buddhist economics arises over the use of natural resources. Bertrand de Jouvenel, the eminent French political philosopher, has characterised 'western man' in words which may be taken as a fair description of the modern economist:

'He tends to count nothing as an expenditure, other than human effort; he does not seem to mind how much mineral matter he wastes and, far worse, how much living matter he destroys. He does not seem to realise at all that human life is a dependent part of an ecosystem of many different forms of life. As the world is ruled from towns where men are cut off from any form of life other than human, the feeling of belonging to an ecosystem is not revived. This results in a harsh and improvident treatment of things upon which we ultimately depend, such as water and trees.'

Just as a modern European economist would not consider it a great economic achievement if all European art treasures were sold to America at attractive prices, so the Buddhist economist would insist that a population basing its economic life on non-renewable fuels is living parasitically, on capital instead of income. Such a way of life could have no permanence and could therefore be justified only as a purely temporary expedient. As the world's resources of non-renewable fuels - coal, oil and natural gas - are exceedingly unevenly distributed over the globe and undoubtedly limited in quantity, it

is clear that their exploitation at an ever-increasing rate is an act of violence against nature which must almost inevitably lead to violence between men.

This fact alone might give food for thought even to those people in Buddhist countries who care nothing for the religious and spiritual values of



*It is not a question of choosing between 'modern growth' and 'traditional stagnation'.*

*It is a question of finding the right path of development, the Middle Way between materialist heedlessness and traditionalist immobility, in short, of finding 'Right Livelihood'.*

their heritage and ardently desire to embrace the materialism of modern economics at the fastest possible speed. Before they dismiss Buddhist economics as nothing better than a nostalgic dream, they might wish to consider whether the path of economic development outlined by modern economics is likely to lead them to places where they really want to be. Towards the end of his courageous book, *The Challenge of Man's Future*, Professor Harrison

Brown of the California Institute of Technology gives the following appraisal:

'Thus we see that, just as industrial society is fundamentally unstable and subject to reversion to agrarian existence, so within their ability to avoid the conditions which impose rigid organisation and totalitarian control. Indeed, when we examine all of the foreseeable difficulties which threaten the survival of industrial civilisation, it is difficult to see how the achievement of stability and the maintenance of individual liberty can be made compatible.'

Even if this were dismissed as a long-term view there is the immediate question of whether 'modernisation', as currently practised without regard to religious and spiritual values, is actually producing agreeable results. As far as the masses are concerned, the results appear to be disastrous - a collapse of the rural economy, a rising tide of unemployment in town and country, and the growth of a city proletariat without nourishment for either body or soul.

It is in the light of both immediate experience and long-term prospects that the study of Buddhist economics could be recommended even to those who believe that economic growth is more important than any spiritual or religious values. For it is not a question of choosing between 'modern growth' and 'traditional stagnation'. It is a question of finding the right path of development, the Middle Way between materialist heedlessness and traditionalist immobility, in short, of finding 'Right Livelihood'.

*The essay is taken from E.F. Schumacher's well known book "Small is beautiful".*

*Pix: Courtesy IGNCA*

*Democracy is not a state in which people act like sheep. Under democracy individual liberty of opinion and action is jealously guarded.*  
-Gandhi



# EXCELLENCE THROUGH SIMPLICITY

A MAJOR DIMENSION OF EXCELLENCE IS SIMPLICITY

## A MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS

M.B. ATHREYA

**M**any people hold an unstated assumption in their mind that success in any field is due to the availability of resources, opportunities, luck, etc. Young people on the threshold of life are particularly liable to this assumption. For the many young in India, who are not affluent, this can be a very discouraging, debilitating thought. For the few who are affluent also, this idea can be a source of complacency and under achievement. Such attitudes could lead to destructive competition, cornering of resources, exhibitionism, wastage and similar ills of a consumerist society.

### EXTERNALISING

All the three factors mentioned above - resources, opportunities and luck - are examples of "externalising" explanations for what happens in human lives. Externalisation takes place in two ways: (i) Attributing another person's success to his or her favoured access to resource, opportunities or luck. (ii) Explaining away one's own failures to the alleged lack of these three factors.

Both ways of responding to life are unfair and unhelpful, to the person and to oneself. Let us examine some of these rationalisations.

### RESOURCES

The normal human tendency is to seek more resources at any given time. This tendency is manifested at different levels of human aggregation - the individual, family, organisation or nation. To be sure, there are occasions when additional resource inputs are required. But more often than not, the hidden agenda is to preempt and hoard the resources, so as to deny it to some other party - be



they relatives, friends, colleagues, another organisation or a foreign nation. The macro, global impact of this micro level obsession with resource control and enjoyment is to threaten the environment, ecology and the survival of plant, animal and, indeed, human life.

### MANAGEMENT LESSON

Modern management science offers a number of concepts, which are not only relevant to business organisations, but are also very pertinent to individuals, families and nations in managing their respective affairs. It is particularly useful to young persons, who have still to make some basic choices of values, attitudes, goals and life positions. They do not have to go through the same amount of unlearning of wrong mind-sets, and relearning of meanings that older adults have to.

Management Science helps each of us raise the following crucial questions about resources in our lives.

- i) Are you making **optimal** use of resources already available to you?
- ii) Are you **developing** the resources at your command, starting from even a small base?
- iii) Are you **generating** more resources, by multiplying the returns on existing resources?
- iv) Are you **mobilising** the resources in and around you, which may be untapped or under-tapped?
- v) Are you **conserving** resources, with a long-term perspective?

Let us examine some examples:

### UTILISATION

First of all, is one aware of all the resources at one's command? Make an inventory of these:

a) **Human Resources** - These are the most valuable resources. Philosophically, some even object to the use of the term "resource" with respect to human beings. Yes, we humans have several dimensions, all simultaneously valid :

- We are the "sources" of all thought, goals and actions.
- We are also the "ends" of all activity, outputs and benefits.
- We can be, in addition, resources to ourselves and to others.

You have direct access to at least three the following:

- Yourself.
- Your siblings.
- Parents.
- Close friends.
- Direct Teachers.

One can examine ways of better utilisation of these human resources through :

- Interaction.
- Learning.
- Evaluation.

The biggest challenge is to know and utilise one's own capacities better.

b) **Physical Resources** - If one wants alibis, there are many things to complain about:

- Lack of an independent room for study at home.
- Lack of an independent fast transport like car or motorcycle to college and back.
- Inadequacy of books and papers.
- Insufficient repertoire to display sartorial elegance at work and socially.

History is replete with examples of individuals excelling under severe resource constraints. I grew up with stories of freedom fighters, scientists and academics studying with hurricane lamps, under street lighting in the early days of rural electrification; in crowded houses, schools, trains, buses and public places.

c) **Financial Resources** - This is in two parts :-

- The family's total disposable income.
- One's own pocket money.

In a wider culture of consumerism, one can so easily fall prey to the tendency for an inferiority complex, with several possible feelings, such as that :

- My parents are not rich enough to get a good start in life - like send-



*But the greatest scope for development is with oneself. The two major developments of the contemporary world underline the centrality of the individual and his initiative.*

ing me to boarding schools, capitation fee colleges, trips abroad, own video and music systems, private sports coaching, health clubs, etc.

- Why didn't I inherit good money either from my father's or at least my mother's side?
- My father is not clever or cunning enough to succeed in the rat race of career and money making.
- Why isn't my mother also a successful career woman?

To be sure, there are honourable exceptions. There are young people

who do introspect and arrive at the following kinds of insights :

- Beyond a point, family wealth and liberal pocket money may be a handicap, a source of temptations, attracting wrong company, forming unhealthy habits.
- It is more important to learn to spend wisely than have plenty to spend.
- It does not take long to run out of money, whatever the starting balance.
- It is a greater degree of personal satisfaction and self-worth to save, earn and build up one's own wealth than to flaunt family inheritance.

#### DEVELOPMENT

We have focussed on resource "utilisation" in order to illustrate the importance of attitudes. On the same lines, but more briefly, it is useful to recognise that one can work at "development" of resources. In enlightened self-interest, one can contribute to the development of others, so that they become, in turn, better resources to oneself. It can be a widening circle of "others" :

- younger siblings.
- close classmates.
- intimate friends.

But the greatest scope for development is with oneself. The two major developments of the contemporary world underline the centrality of the individual and his initiative. These two developments are :

- The emergence of pluralistic democracy as the almost universal political system.
- The acceptance of a broadly competitive, social market economy.

The former requires an aware, responsible individual citizen, who can exercise the right to vote, as well as participate in several relevant social issues. The latter change makes it necessary for the individual to equip oneself to participate effectively in economic activity. With the State playing a less dominant role, a great responsibility falls on the "elite", to provide meaningful leadership in all fields - economic, social, educational, medical, legal, aesthetic and spiritual. The acceptance of the market and political decentralisation means also the world is accepting the following:

- There will always be some kind of elite.



- Laws, policies and systems should ensure that the elite is coming up on merit and demonstrated performance.
- Culture should foster the norm that the elite will see it as its duty to contribute, to enrich society in various ways - economically, educationally, aesthetically, etc.

### GENERATION

An attitude of dependence keeps one waiting for resources from outside.

One's confidence and self-worth go up by generating one's own resources. This is a way of earning and deriving autonomy from parents, teachers and seniors in any context - firm, club, association or similar organisation. Delegation and freedom are not only to be given, but taken by one's initiative.

Resources can be "generated" by an individual in several ways :-

- Time saved from wasteful applications is, indeed, time generated. An era of consumerism is an invitation for wasting time in a myriad ways :
  - Window shopping.
  - Shopping.
  - Promenading, in order to display what one has acquired.
  - Partying, to see and to be seen.
  - Seeing films and videos, not on merits, but to be seen to be "in," "with it".
  - Similarly, reading certain kinds of magazines and books.

A core message in Time Management training courses is :

"You will not **get** the time to do the many things that you want; but you will have to **make** the time to do the priorities".

- A fair amount of "learning" can be generated by seeking out the right kinds of experiences, introspecting on them, generating insights about one's strengths, weaknesses, aptitudes and aspirations.
- Physical, psychological, intellectual and spiritual energy can be generated by :
  - Physical and mental fitness, through appropriate exercise and diet.
  - Meditation for stilling the mind and probing deeper into one's sub-conscious.
  - Selective reading and exposure for conceptual clarity.

- Philosophical and devotional exploration for some understanding of the cosmos, life forms and human links and responsibilities.
- Avoiding misuse of that energy in unproductive pursuits and conflicts.

We have held back the most obvious and elementary aspect of generation, namely that of money. It takes a fair amount of maturity and self-control in a climate of consumerism to control one's herd instincts, restrain from excessive consumption, and make a habit of saving from pocket money first, and from income later.

### MOBILISATION

One of the key elements of leadership in any field is to mobilise dormant resources. Such leadership is required in all fields - in the student body, faculty, government, industry, arts, politics and social service. Pumping a lot of external resources is not an effective route to excellence. In fact, experience shows that external resources, beyond a point, harm individuals, communities and nations. One can mobilise resources creatively in many ways:

- Invite classmates and friends to be directly involved in worthwhile projects - intellectual, aesthetic, environmental, etc.
- From those who cannot devote time to such projects, get contributions in cash or kind - books, papers, clothes, etc.
- Similarly, provide worthwhile outlets to people in the neighbourhood and surrounding community.

### INDIAN PERSPECTIVES

The above points are not an argument for austerity, self-denial and asceticism. Excellence can be achieved quite consistent with enjoyment. However, one dimension of excellence is simplicity. Gaudiness and any form of excess is a wastage of resources, and hence detracts from the very concept of excellence. Indian philosophy recognises four legitimate objectives of human existence. It recommends them in a particular order, namely:

- i) *Dharma* - Righteousness
- ii) *Artha* - Wealth
- iii) *Kama* - Enjoyment
- iv) *Moksha* - Release

The mortal is typically likely to evolve in the following order:

- a) *Kama* - Want to enjoy the good

things of life.

- b) *Artha* - Seek wealth to buy those things.

The consumerist ethos stimulates the individual towards these two objectives.

Developing country governments will chase GNP growth for some time to come. Industry will develop new products and services and advertise heavily and seductively. It is rather for the individual to defend himself against overstimulation. He or she can do this by consciously cultivating simplicity, not so much in goals, but in methods. Such simplicity will lead most individuals towards the third objective:

- c) *Dharma* - Pursue wealth and enjoyment through the right methods.

In this ageless debate of whether good wins over bad, or vice versa, the data at individual, national and international levels continue to underline the message of hope that good wins, and increasingly faster.

Indian philosophy has two other simple messages that can help us towards excellence. Both are in the Gita:

- i) *Yogah karmasu kausalam* - Yoga is excellence in action. It is an invitation to excel in whatever one does.
- ii) *Yogah samatva uchayae* - Yoga is balance. Avoiding extremes.

In an age of consumerism, a balanced approach to life is more imperative. We can conclude with two statements :

- i) Excellence is Simplicity - Making complex things simpler, by cutting out the inessentials.
- ii) Simplicity is Excellence - Doing things as simply and efficiently as possible, is the best route to excellence.

*Dr. Mrityunjay Athreya has a varied background. He has been a formal student of finance, behavioural sciences and management. He has also been informally a student of philosophy and society. After working in Indian industry, he obtained a doctorate from the Harvard Business School. He has taught at the IIM, Calcutta, and the London and Scottish Business Schools. He now consults with industry, government and NGOs.*

# NEEDED

## A POLICY PRESCRIPTION

NALIN JOHRI

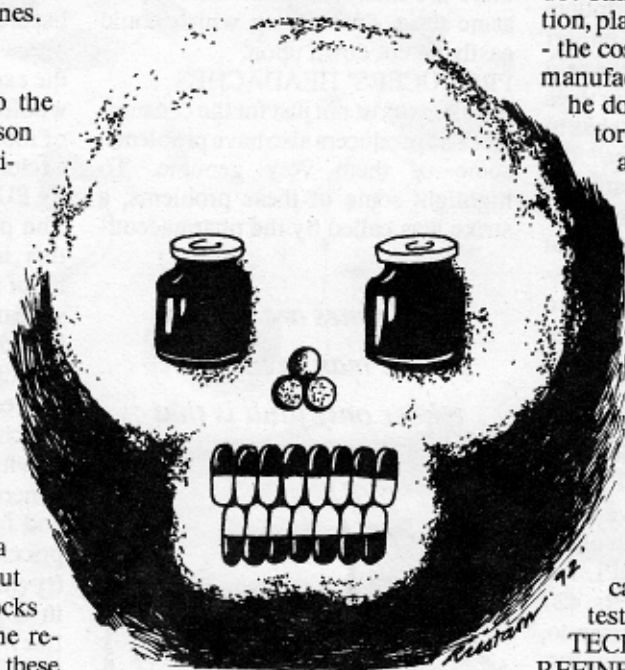
**T**his is a true story. Mr. H.N. Ram is a school-teacher from Jamshedpur. His son was suffering from cancer. He was desperately in need of Vinblastine, a life saving drug for cancer. It had to be got from Coimbatore.

So ran the advertisement of a popular company. Mr. Ram was certainly very fortunate to have got such express service. It isn't always a success story. For each Mr. Ram, who has the means and is able to procure medicines from far off places, there are scores who just don't have the means or are unable to procure supplies of vital medicines.

### A TRIP TO THE CHEMISTS

Often it happens that a trip to the chemists, draws a blank. The reason for this being that a particular medicine is not available. Of course, the ever helpful chemist did suggest a medicine of the same genre. Your dazed mind is now faced with the choice of accepting what could be just an ersatz or the trek back to the physician. What has happened here is that some chemists stock medicines of particular companies for considerations other than the medicine itself. It could very well happen that you have a prescription for Ranitidine - but your neighbourhood chemist stocks only Cimetidine or even just the recently introduced Omeprazole. All these belong to the same family of anti-ulcer drugs except for changes in formulations and the price charged. All available eye-space at the chemists is chock-full with *medicine-like* products - products, which on account of their supposed medicinal content in whatever minute fraction, pass off as medicine. The eye-space, of course, commanding a price. In effect, these have a tendency to crowd out genuine medicines.

*Does the world of allopathic drugs conform to the basic tenets of the Hippocratic oath? This "industry of service" has now become an "industry of commerce" and has gone the consumerist way. The author analyses some of the issues involved.*



### SPURIOUS DRUGS AND QUALITY CONTROL

Of late, a disturbing trend has also been noticed. Drugs which are meant to cure humans are killing them more often than not, due to their substandard quality. The most common example is the faint opacity of a fungus observed in intravenous solutions, causing febrile reactions. These substandard products are flooding the market due to

the amended drug rules (1977) which require that each drug manufacturing unit, big or small, set up an "in house" laboratory for testing drugs. Earlier, the manufacturers could get their raw materials and final products tested by government approved laboratories. Failure to comply with this could even lead to cancellation of the license of the errant drug manufacturer.

Big houses like Glaxo, Hoechst, Ranbaxy etc. can afford to and have quality laboratories. But what does the average small manufacturer producing maybe only one or two specific drugs do? This does add to his cost of production, placing him in a peculiar situation - the cost increase might wipe out this manufacturer from the market, but if he doesn't comply with the laboratory clause, the drug controlling authorities would wipe him out.

As it is, given the shortage of technical staff to man such laboratories and the possibility of the manufacturer pressurising their technical staff to approve, the emergence of batches of sub-standard drugs appears a likely outcome. Of course, the drug control authorities would like to counter this argument by clinging to the flimsy reason that under these amended rules, a manufacturer can carry out quicker and more tests.

### TECHNOLOGY NEEDING REFINEMENT

The story of medical equipment is even stranger. There is a black market for catheters, scalp-vein sets, etc. Mind you, scalp-vein sets are manufactured in India. But their quality leaves a lot to be desired. Dr. Nayan, who practices in a private nursing home in Delhi opined that he would feel safer using the fine Japanese scalp-vein sets on his patients rather than their poorer Indian cousins. Strange, a small thing such as a scalp-vein set and we just don't have the



technology to turn out good quality sets. Or, is it due to the fact that technology is tied up in perfecting the technique to make imitations, so much so that the real thing - the scalp-vein set, fades into the background? Even otherwise, the mind has been so conditioned that people would rather fork out the extra rupees even if it means an under-the-board transaction, the end result of course being a quality product. Not realizing that what they are left with is a dud product. Who do they get redressal from? Don't the "extra rupees" send an unambiguous signal to manufacturers Indian, not to compromise on quality?

#### LICENSES TO....

Many specialized lines of treatment, as in cancer, require drugs which, besides being very expensive have to be more often than not imported from abroad. And importing means entering the murky field of licenses. If a particular drug is in short supply, what does a helpless consumer do, short of a letter to the Drug Controller? The authorities invariably reply giving a list of Indian companies with the requisite import licenses and also the news that the said drug is *not* in short supply. How does this help the consumer who still has to wait for Mr. Fix-it to "arrange" the medicines albeit at a higher cost? It is not just the latest antibiotics like Vancomycin which are in short supply but also the coon BCG vaccine, so necessary for immunization, which are hard to come by. Take the case of potassium penicillin. This was manufactured by Sarabhai Chemicals and also by the public sector, Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd (IDPL). Supplies were easy to come by. The ailing IDPL then became so sick that losses have completely eliminated the net worth of the company many years ago. IDPL has built up an accumulated loss of Rs. 427 crores by March '91. In this scenario, potassium penicillin started disappearing from chemists. The peculiarity of the situation borders on the tragic. IDPL can be revived possibly by privatization. But this will depend on the government's will to carry this move through, especially as all the units are in politically sensitive states. Added to this is a recalcitrant work force of 12,000. And the Rishikesh plant of IDPL has some of the best facilities to manufacture, besides potassium peni-

cillin, streptomycin, tetracycline, oxytetracycline, ampicillin and cephalexin. These are some of the most widely used antibiotics. If the November 29, 1991 public sector strike is anything to go by, it is unlikely that this privatization move will see the light of day.

#### PRICING THE RIGHT MIX

The Drug Price Control Order, by deviating from the original policy direction of 1979 has made the manufacture of *non-essential* drugs more lucrative. Naturally, with no compulsion now bearing on them, drug manufacturers are giving the bye to many essential drugs. However, the Ministry of Chemicals has finally woken up and is looking into the matter and is trying to bring some sort of linkage between the price structure and the list of essential drugs so as to ensure that the production capacity improves during the Eighth Plan period. There is a plethora of non-essential drugs with at times unnecessary changes in formulation and brand names. The result being that there are many manufacturers of the same drug - something which could easily be cut down upon.

#### PRODUCERS' HEADACHES

Problems exist not just for the consumers. The producers also have problems, some of them very genuine. To highlight some of these problems, a strike was called by the pharmaceuti-

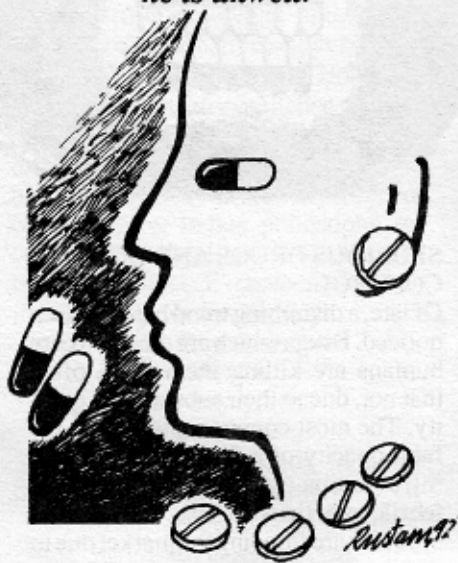
cal trade and industry on the 26 of August '91. Issues centered around, withdrawal of five percent ceiling on price increases, neutralisation of cost escalation, on account of devaluation, cost increases due to domestic inputs would be neutralized, computing prices on actual as against notional costs, continuation of loan license manufacture and trade margins for retailers. Apparently only the first two are under ministerial consideration. What this augurs for the common man, besides the obvious increase in prices is more hardship.

The revised draft of the New Drug Policy which is awaiting Cabinet clearance, proposes radical changes with far-reaching consequences. The major policy changes that this enunciates are: a) a single maximum allowable post-manufacturing expense (MAPE) of 100% by merging the existing two drug categories into one b) reduction in number of drugs under price control from 140 in category I to around 95 in the single automatic escalation of prices list under certain conditions c) companies will be allowed to jack up prices to the extent of 70% of the increase in the wholesale price index, de-reserving 7 of the 15 drugs that are manufactured exclusively by the public sector.

#### IN PURSUIT OF AN AWAKENING

The picture that emerges from all of this, is at best confused. It hinges on a lot of ifs and buts. The situation is in a state of flux but indications are that the high drug prices might rise even higher. Quality control as well as the essential/non-essential mix of drugs are issues which cannot be left to the social sensitivity of manufacturers. Something concrete needs to be done about this and fast. With no let up in the rising prices, an ailing pharmaceutical industry (though some major companies are in a position to flaunt their bottom-line) and a government preoccupied with a host of other issues, falling ill can prove a very costly affair. Hard times are in store for the man in the street whose only fault is that he is unwell.

*Hard times are in store  
for the man in the street  
whose only fault is that  
he is unwell.*



*Nalin Johri, 22 is the volunteer editor of the National Cancer Foundation newsletter. He is a student of Economics at the Hindu College, Delhi University Illustrations: Rustam*

# THIS IS MY COW, SIR!

AMRITA PRITAM

**T**he colour of her skin was a rare shade of light yellowish brown. Her four sensuous teats were not the usual black, sagging and wrinkled lumps of flesh. Instead these were pink with a shade of black that made the pink in them more prominent. That is why the villagers called her a Kapila cow.

Kapila collapsed each time she tried to get up on her broken legs. Each time she made a gallant effort to dig her hoofs on the ground and stand straight, she staggered and crashed helplessly on the hard ground.

Now there was no semblance any movement in her body. Breathing heavily she stuck out her tongue to lick the stone. Instead, her mouth

tasted the salty smell of her blood. At night she had seen the other cows. Now they were all hulks of flesh, limbs torn from their bodies.

She heard some voices from far away. A voice boomed across, "This is an atrocity committed on the holy mother cow. May the damnation of God fall on these sinners and criminals who have slaughtered the innocent cows."

Another agitated voice spoke, "A country in which this sin was committed has taken leave of its senses. That country will surely sink in the curse of the innocent blood of its cows".

A hundred voices echoed from a vaulted sky. It was as if these voices from the darkness had assaulted the rays of the rising sun.

Kapila was sinking into a numbness and her hoofs were stuck in streams of warm blood that flowed on the ground.

Then she felt some people walking around in uniforms and surveying what had happened. She saw them with her stony eyes. Far away she noticed the wreckage of an aeroplane.

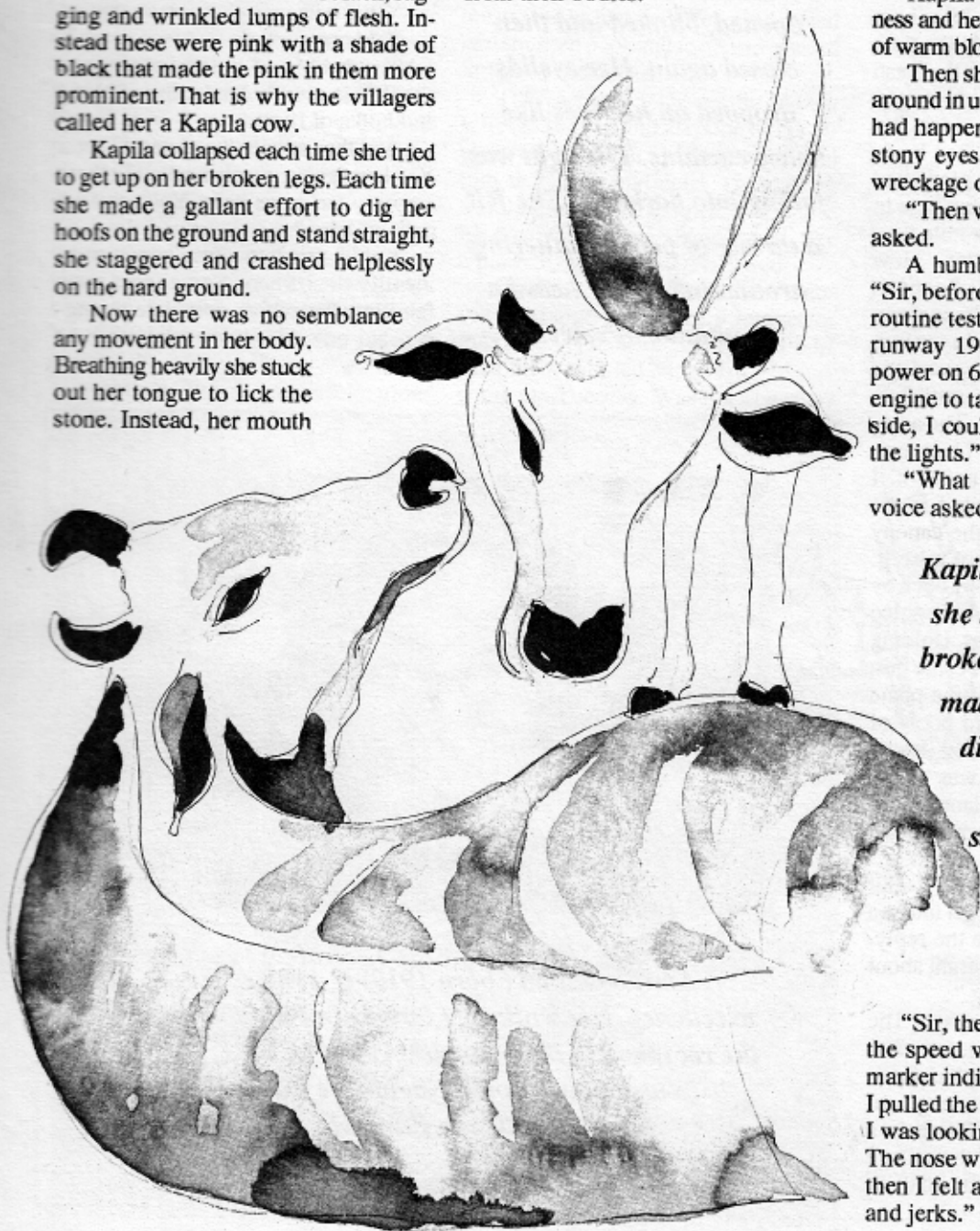
"Then what happened?" somebody asked.

A humble and abject reply came, "Sir, before taking off, I performed the routine tests and lined up the plane on runway 19. Releasing the brakes and power on 6000 RPM, I accelerated the engine to take off. When I looked outside, I could not see anything except the lights."

"What happened after that?" the voice asked impatiently.

*Kapila collapsed each time she tried to get up on her broken legs. Each time she made a gallant effort to dig her hoofs on the ground and stand straight, she staggered and crashed helplessly on the hard ground.*

"Sir, the aeroplane kept on rolling, the speed was increasing, the middle marker indicated a speed of 135 knots. I pulled the control stick and as I did so I was looking at the instrument panel. The nose wheel of the plane lifted and then I felt a number of violent shocks and jerks."





He went on, "I shut the engine immediately and applied the brakes. It seemed as if somebody was shaking the plane violently. My first reaction was that, perhaps, the tyre of the plane had burst or skidded off the runway towards the trees. Or perhaps, it had crashed into a pit. At this moment, with a terrible jerk, the right wheel of the plane broke away and with a sharp swerve turned right and then skidded off the runway. There were sparks around the plane as its belly screeched against the ground."

The impatient voice interrupted him, "Where was the navigator at that time?"

A new voice intervened, "Sir, I am the navigator of the plane. At the time of the take off, I was sitting on the crash seat. The plane came to a sudden stop and I tried to open the entry door. But the door had got jammed. Then I saw that the nose section of the plane had broken apart with a big gaping hole in it and I squeezed out of that hole."

Somebody asked the pilot, "How did you get out of the plane?" An abject voice replied, "Sir, I had only one way of getting out and that was to jettison out of my seat canopy. I pressed the button, the canopy flung open and then again shut back with a bang. The aeroplane at that time was still. Therefore, there was no flow of air under it. I realised that I was imprisoned in the aeroplane. I tried to open the canopy with my hands but could not raise it. Then I tried to raise the canopy open by pressing my head against it. I struggled and opened it with my hands. Holding it ajar, I jumped out. When I came out, I saw that the right wing of the plane had broken off. There were pools of blood round the runway and I saw many cows lying dead. I was afraid that with this impact the plane would catch fire. This is why we raced off and stood far away."

Another voice called out, "But how the hell did these cows get into the airfield area?" Quick came the reply, "Sir, we are completely ignorant about it and it is, in fact, amazing."

An authoritarian voice rang, "The investigation must be quick and thorough. But right now the situation is volatile. Both of you should not go out of your protected areas. There is a demonstration going on in the village against us for having rammed into these cows."

Kapila felt that her life was ebbing away. Her eyes opened, blinked and then closed again. Her eyelids dropped over her eyes like heavy curtains. The light was fading into darkness. She felt a throng of people gathering around her as she heard a multitude of voices.

Somebody asked, "Who are the owners of these cows?"

Kapila felt some stirring within her. But as she tried to look up, silence fell

*Kapila felt that her life was ebbing away. Her eyes opened, blinked and then closed again. Her eyelids dropped on her eyes like heavy curtains. The light was fading into darkness. She felt a throng of people gathering around her as she heard a multitude of voices.*

on the scene. From somewhere a voice came loud and clear, "Those of you who own the cows will give your names. You will get compensation for these dead cows."

Then a babble of voices tore the air in a burst of cries and shrieks.

"This was my cow, Sir."

"This white cow is mine and my name is SHERA."

"This was my cow, Sir, and my name is Harnama."

"This cow with three teats is mine and my name is Rekha."

"This tail less cow is mine, Sir."

"This cow is mine..."

"This cow..."

"This cow..."

The babble of voices and names shook this ghastly landscape of blood and hulks of flesh.

And then a voice thundered, "I see... You have given twenty names but there are only ten cows here. You are all a pack of liars."

Kapila tried to open her eyes to identify the owners. Some faces were familiar; the others complete strangers. No one ever knew from where



*Amrita Pritam (born 1919) is a writer par excellence. Her works are largely in Punjabi. She is the recipient of the Jnanpith Award in 1981, for her outstanding work "Kaghaz Te Canvas", written in Punjabi.*

they had come. Kapila recognised the face of her master, Mohan. She thought of her calf and with all the might of her fading life tried to yell out something. But a big lump choked her throat.

A voice boomed in the air, "You are claiming ownership of these cows because of the promised compensation. Eh, I see your game. You are not owners of these dead cows. You are all fakers and deceivers."

Even before these words could die away, the owners of the cows had quietly slipped out. A deafening darkness fell on the landscape. Kapila did not know whether it was the darkness of the approaching night or the darkness of death that was stalking around her, ready to grab her by the throat and take her far away. A pause of silence followed as if many hundred years had passed. A voice yelled out, "Tell us, *chaukidar*, how ever did these cows get into the restricted area of this airfield. We have just come to know that these cows are brought stealthily to graze here every night. The owners of these cows bribe you every month. You are going to be hauled up for this scandal."

Kapila's life was a mere faint glow

now. She tried to move her tail to flap away the flies on her body. But even her tail had become numb and motionless.

Somebody marched on the scene with his boots thumping the ground. He shouted, "Where are the twenty people who had come to claim compensation? Now, no one is prepared to even own these dead animals. They even deny having ever seen them—just because they have been told that they have caused a damage of thirty-five lakh rupees to our plane! And now the cows will have to bear this."

Kapila longed to see the face of her master but he had fled. Her mind reeled and shuttled back and forth in a myriad image of memories.

Time was when her master Mohan fell seriously ill and all hope of his recovery were given up. Some saint told him that on a particular Tuesday he should offer a ball of kneaded flour to his cow with his own hands. And, like a miracle, Mohan had recovered.

Kapila's numbness and lifeless limbs felt a strange sensation, a hunger of longing. A ball of kneaded flour! Memories shuttled backward and forward. On Tuesday. Was it a Tuesday?

Her master. Did she have a master? Who would ever own her now? A lump of lifelessness.

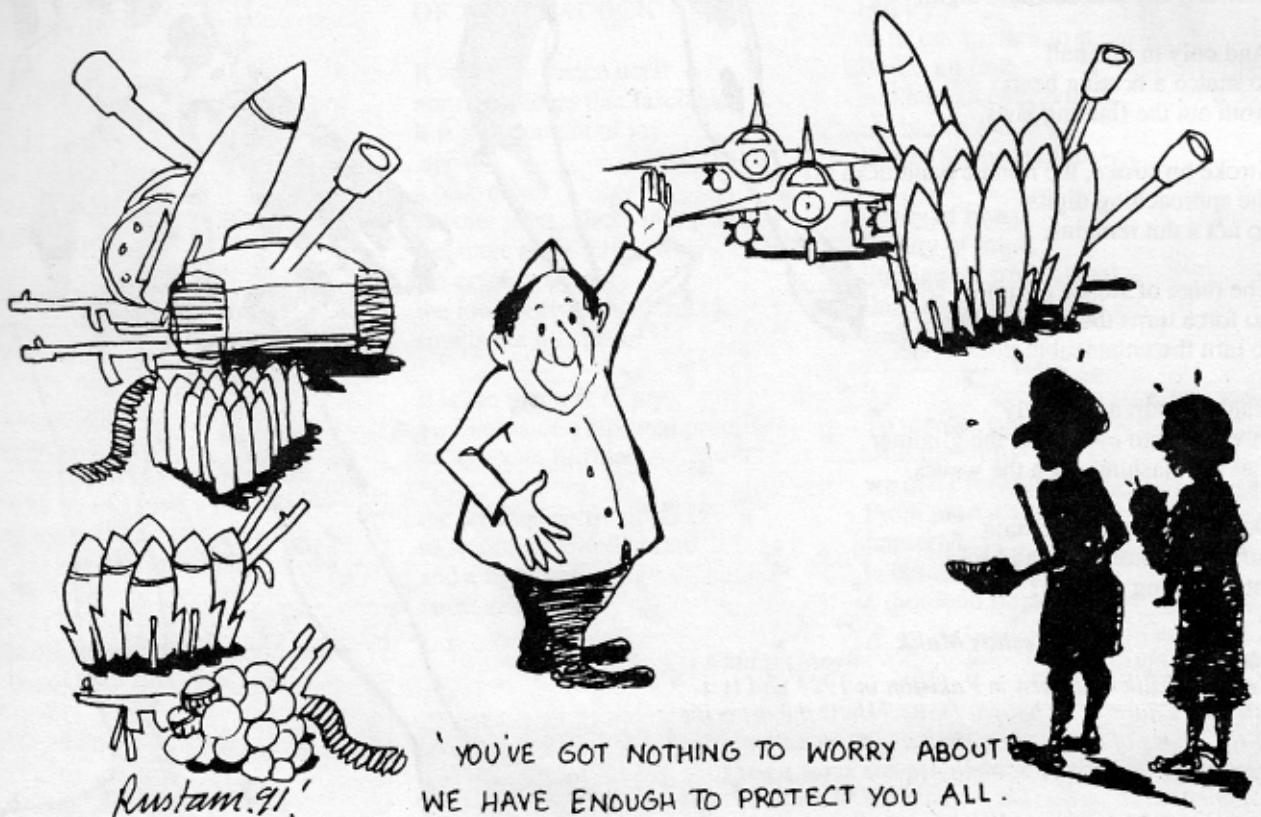
Kapila's stony eyes faintly saw some movement in front of her. Maybe, Mohan had come after all. Maybe, he had come to put his soft hand on the lifeless skin of his dying cow.

With a great effort she tried to lift the eyelids off her misty eyes. A soft touch on her skin sent a shiver of warmth through her body. Something was touching her.... A touch of velvet.... A feeling of silk. Something softer and warmer than the caressing hands of Mohan.

Through the slit of her drooping eyes she knew who it was. Her own being. Her very life. Her own calf.

From somewhere, her own calf had come. Where did he come from? A part of her being, her own calf was licking the body of his dying mother. A surge of tide hit her and she was carried on it far away.

*Translated from the original Punjabi by Manmohan Singh  
Courtesy: Pratibha India  
Illustration: Suchitra Chauhan*





## THE DANCER, DANCING

That dancer dancing, the singer singing?-  
neither one nor the other  
what one or other seem  
but them, upon whom has come  
the soul of fire leaping, water running-  
spirits of the winds.

It is only so  
those turning gyres, the whirling rings-  
all such, surprising sounds from chords and strings;  
the medium singing as it sings,  
or springing up the breathless winding stair  
though no wings.

Yes, as and when  
fire-water-the winds-care to conspire  
the pulse mounts higher,  
tongue inspires-

a Nijinsky, an Ulanova  
or who have you-  
dreams.

## GRACE

Half an hour, only a half  
before comes the great divide  
between day and absolute night.

And only in this half  
to snatch a beating heart  
from out the flaming jaws.

Stroke on stroke, the minute hand ticks off  
the approaching digits  
so not a dot remains.

The reign of stones resumed,  
no force turns the waiting page-  
to turn the untameable tides alone.

Half an hour, a half only  
in which into eyes draw the glimmer  
that lies flashing upon the waves.

Does such grace, as obtain  
suffice to rouse body and soul  
into a lasting reunion?

-Keshav Malik

*Keshav Malik was born in Pakistan in 1924 and is a Literary Editor of "Thought Daily." He is the art critic of the Times of India since 1978 and is an active member of the Poetry Society. He has some poetry volumes to his credit. They are called 'Negatives'. His anthology, "Islands of Mind" has just been released. The above two poems are from the same anthology.*



I remember responding enthusiastically to the poems I had to study in my kindergarten classes. When I wrote a few and showed them to my friends, as well as to my teachers, they encouraged me to write more.... I continued doing so throughout my school and college years. In 1950, I decided, while in London, to give up my job and devote myself to the writing of poetry. My first book was published soon after I left for Bombay in a steamship, receiving a few copies of it at a French sea-port. The rest of them arrived in Bombay two months later.

I cannot explain why I chose poetry as my main medium of expression. Nor can I describe what I usually try to convey through my poems. It is all in the actual state of mind and the process of writing that one discovers what one wants to say, and how. Love of reading poetry and then wanting to write it add up to becoming a poet, though not necessarily a good one. Both the reading and the writing have to be related to a way of life, and to persistent interest in the problems of poetic craftsmanship. Without that interest and that way of life, the "poet" has only chosen a mode of self-indulgence.

#### A WAY OF LIFE

"I am in love with India",  
the tourist said  
when I saw him off  
at the airport.

He was not referring to  
the 200,000 or more  
pavement-dwellers of Bombay.

Returning home, I glanced  
at some of them-  
and turned away.  
I, too, was in love with India,  
and even more, with myself.  
What can be done, I ask  
repeatedly  
about India's poverty?  
Then I settled down to one more  
splendid South Indian vegetable  
biryani  
with a cheerful friend.

Loving India, and oneself,  
is a way of life, after all.

-Nissim Ezekiel

#### A WALK

i would like to go  
for a walk with you;  
as we pass the side  
of large grey walls  
pluck white and yellow wild flowers  
and

for that touch of cultivated  
subtlety  
collect a hand  
of fragrant white jasmine  
from the overhanging  
of delicate leaves

as the mind becomes  
a wisp of coolness  
joining the blue sky  
there lies only the distance  
to the green hillock ahead

there, among the spread  
of the dark, large trees  
one may turn round  
to face  
the marvel of creation.

-Akhila Ghosh

#### THE DANCE OF THE PEACOCK

It is not the dance itself  
nor the colours that fascinate,  
it is the moment of joy  
above  
a blue cloud  
another joins, clicks into place  
the stage is set  
the colours shimmy  
the long nose of the peacock  
smells the wet earth

it is the moment of joy,  
awareness of a repeated promise  
being again fulfilled

the parched earth yields  
to strains of jewelled rain  
and a light spreading  
in the sky.

-Akhila Ghosh

#### THE SEARCH

The road of destiny  
each one different,  
cross roads of life  
leading to darkness,  
leading to light.

Narrow, winding and  
treacherous.  
The road....pre-mapped  
for all of us.

Calls, beckons and,  
lures,  
for some to fall,  
into the gaps, opened  
like primeval wounds,  
for some, to claw,  
their way, towards  
the glittering eye of  
the storm.

To be blown away  
into a cosmic dance  
or, devoured by  
the many-headed hydra  
called, Chance.

We hear the strains  
of the Tandav  
and try,  
to fit our rhythm to it.  
But.... all fails  
and human endeavours,  
are blown away  
like so many dead leaves.

Purity of heart.  
Beauty of mind.  
Strength of truth.... and,  
Enlightenment of soul  
lead the way  
we choose to walk.

To merge.....  
with the entity  
we call everlasting.  
From mortality....to  
immortality  
is but.... ,  
a thousand steps.

-Sujata Pandey

Send in your poems, with your name, age, occupation and address, to:  
Mayura Tewari, Poetry Editor, 143, golf Links, New Delhi- 110003



# WHY BECOME AN ACTIVIST?

ASHISH KOTHARI

**T**o be sensitive in these trouble-torn times is to be a worried person. It is not easy; one is always acutely aware of the injustices, the atrocities being committed, the cruelty of human nature. And what choice does one have then, but to be an activist?

I have been what one might call a *voluntary activist* for over a dozen years now. I have concentrated on environmental issues trying to do my very minute bit in bringing this insanely destructive world back into some semblance of sanity. In these twelve years I have seen things go from bad to worse; the loss of our heritage, forests razed to the ground, wildlife decimated, rivers turned into sewers, tribals dispossessed of their land and rights, people murdered and maimed by killer gases, and my own city, Delhi, become more of a hell-hole. But I have also seen sparks of hope turn into rays of light. Ordinary people promoting our heritage and the arts, saving forests, governments responding with appropriate policies, laws and programmes, and a whole range of alternative development paths emerging. Has life as an activist been worth it?

Sometimes, when it all gets too much, when news comes in of yet another forest sold off to a contractor, when the police shows its frequently repressive might against peaceful protesters, when another careless motorist drives over a puppy trying

*"The voluntary sector" as we know it today came into existence to fill the gaps of State failure. The very fact that the people who compromise this sector are "voluntary" gives a new dimension to their cause, namely, that of selflessness. The strength and conviction behind this process have shown up rare individuals of character and refinement. THE EYE gratefully acknowledges voluntary movements all over the world and wishes to feature them and learn from them in the following issues.*

about is the latest market prices... and perhaps about being kidnapped! How can people be so oblivious to anything other than themselves?

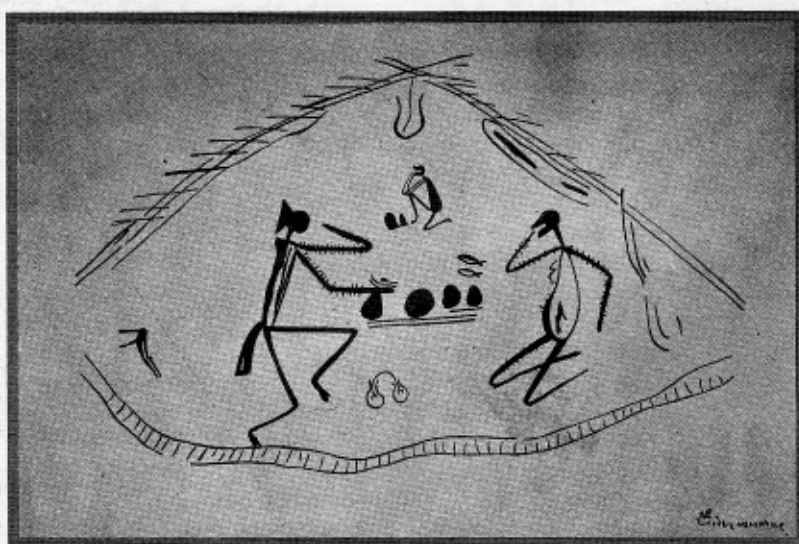
But they are, and so are, I am sorry to say, many of those who are reading this magazine. They are, quite frankly, not concerned about petty things like social exploitation and ecological destruction, they would much rather worry about momentous problems like how to land a job with a cushy five-figure salary, or if they already have one, how to get a promotion. They would rather spend a few hundred rupees buying a new dress (so necessary for the Wednesday night party), rather than donate even a fraction of that on such trivial matters as earthquake relief. It is not necessarily anyone's fault; our bitterly competitive educational system moulds them into thinking how to be one up

on the other, not how to help the other; and our "21st-century" consumerist society entices them into always wanting more than they have. Result: an uncaring, selfish, over-consuming, passive human being.

But then, what is wrong with that?

Plenty. Especially if the person in question belongs to the privileged section of Indian society (like myself) having had the opportunity of a comfortable life; adequate *roti, kapda aur makaan*

(food, clothing and shelter), higher education, and urban amenities. Because then, he or she has been subsidised by the state and in all likelihood, has enjoyed such a lifestyle at the expense of



to cross the road, I almost wish I had never been sensitive to such things, never become an activist, but rather gone into diamonds or some such thing. Then all I would have had to worry

some less fortunate citizens of India.

Let me explain that last part of the sentence a bit. In the past few years, it has become increasingly clear to me that our resource consumption in the city has a drastic impact on villagers, often hundreds of kilometres away. Our electricity probably comes from a dam which has displaced people and submerged forests or, from a thermal power station which pollutes the air and fields and waterways of villages downwind/downstream. The paper used in our daily newspapers and in the magazines we are so fond of, including this one, comes from bamboo forests which once supported entire tribal communities. The colleges we study in and the houses we live in are built with bricks made from the topsoil of some farmers' fields, farmers who have probably been paid peanuts for it. And all this has been made possible by government policies which allow, indeed encourage, such transfer of resources from the villages to the cities, from the poor to the rich.

Does that make you feel guilty? I am sorry, that was not my intention. Guilt cannot be an adequate basis for taking to activism. For that, a simple lifestyle would be an adequate response. But an ascetic who seals himself/herself hermetically from society is not much more of a socially useful character than an elite person with a lavish lifestyle, only a little less destructive. Both are socially passive, and unable, or unwilling, to do anything about the crises around them.

But if not guilt, then what could be a basis for activism? Concern. Concern for the consequences of one's actions, concern for the humans (and other creatures) who suffer things we would ourselves hate to suffer, empathy, respect for others' lives, a feel for others. These are the cornerstones of activism. And those of us who are lucky enough not to have to worry about where our next meal is to come from, have a responsibility as human beings, to do something about those who do have such a worry.

What comprises activism? That's a difficult question to answer. These days, everything ranging from terrorism to

lecturing at seminars, is termed activism! I would rather restrict my definition to a smaller range, basically to activities which are socially responsible. Terrorism is not socially responsible...nor, often, is seminarizing.



*The colleges we study in and the houses we live in are built with bricks made from the topsoil of some farmers' fields, farmers who have probably been paid peanuts for it. And all this has been made possible by government policies which allow, indeed encourage, such transfer of resources from the villages to the cities, from the poor to the rich.*

But action research could be; that is, research which is oriented towards some social action, even if the researcher himself/herself does not take this action. Then there is, of course, a greatly diverse range of activities which could constitute activism: social work, organising the disprivileged or helping them organise themselves, socially relevant media work, lobbying with the state, participating in protest demonstrations, taking legal redress, promoting the arts and preserving our heritage.

Activism is not not, should never be treated as fashion. It is today, indeed, fashionable to claim to be an environmentalist, or a social worker or

a promoter of culture. Poor villagers who are protesting about the destruction of their life-support systems (forests, rivers, land) are true environmentalists, but do not claim to be so. But there is also a whole bunch of ivory tower pseudo-activists, who treat the whole thing as a means of making a name for themselves, who are basically jumping onto the bandwagon, and who, in the process give all environmentalists a bad name. Activism as a fad means you do not actually want to get your hands dirty, you would rather avoid controversial issues, and you treat as mere objects the people you claim to represent. True activism means the opposite of these.

While I think it is wrong to look at activism as a 'career' which can get you places in society, there is nothing wrong with earning a livelihood from it. Being able to feed and clothe yourself, even give yourself some basic comforts, is not evil. Indeed, I think that self-deprivation is as bad as over-indulgence for, it is a form of violence towards oneself which is as unacceptable as violence towards others. I know many activists who are not careful about their personal well-being, and end up sick and diseased, with only their sheer will-power carrying them on. Not only is their own productivity reduced, but they become a constant source of worry to their dear ones.

Does all this sound a bit patronising, or maybe slightly arrogant? I hope not, for it is not intended to. I do not claim to have found all the answers to my own personal and professional quandaries, I am groping as much as anyone else. But perhaps my dozen or so years of activism have taught me something, and it's nice to share it with others. After all, that is also a must for an activist; to reach out, to share information and experience, and to be frank, honest, forthright. I'm trying. ●

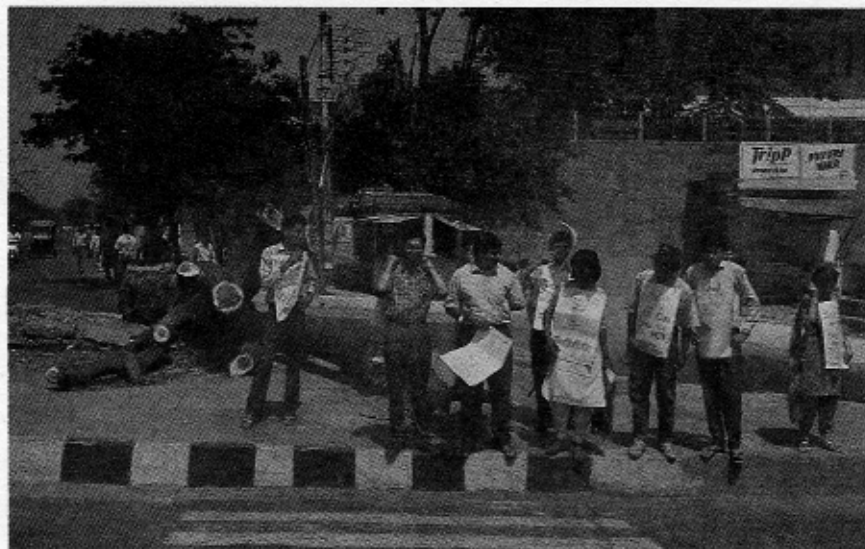
*Ashish Kothari is active with the environmental action group, Kalpavriksh, since 1979, and with the anti-Narmada Project movement since 1983. He is currently a Research Associate at the Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi.*



# THE I.I.T. FLYOVER

RAJIV SINGH

Last summer when the academic environs of IIT bore a comparatively deserted look on account of vacations, the few watchful students who had stayed back found that the trees from IIT Gate to Hauz-Khas were being felled to construct a flyover. The IIT Nature Club immediately started a protest movement against this 'ecocide'. Friends from IYAPS and Kalpavriksha, an environmental action group, helped a lot in mobilising people. The protest got heard, not only in the press and AIR but also in the corridors of power. Two protest marches, one - a symbolic funeral of the killed trees, and subsequent lobbying made the authorities transplant full-grown trees,



which would have been cut and the timber taken, into the IIT campus. The expenditure incurred by the Delhi Administration in this process made them more circumspect in felling any more trees, elsewhere and the LG (lieutenant Governor) ordered that no more trees are to be felled in Delhi, without his prior permission.

*Rajiv Singh is a B. Tech in Mechanical Engineering from IIT Kanpur, and is presently doing his Masters at IIT Delhi. He has initiated and has been involved in nature-study and environmental action groups at both these campuses.*

## CHIPKO INFORMATION CENTRE

SERAIN via TEHRI PIN 249001 TEHRI-GARHWAL U.P. (HIMALAYA) INDIA.

### APPEAL FOR THE EARTHQUAKE-STRICKEN PEOPLE OF UTTARKASHI & TEHRI GARHWAL

*We are sending this appeal to you on behalf of earthquake victims of Garhwal Himalaya. The miseries, which this mishap has brought upon the simple hill-folk cannot be described in words. It has generated a wave of sympathy in the whole country, but the magnitude of disaster is so great that we need international help. About 10,000 families are to be provided temporary shelter immediately. The cost of tin sheets for one shelter will come to about US \$ 250.*

*We have co-ordinated it with the environmental protection movement. The press has come out in full support of our stand on Tehri Dam.*

*The amount of help may be sent to PARVATIYA NAVJEEVAN MANDAL, SILYARA, Tehri Garhwal, PIN-249155, through STATE BANK OF INDIA, GHANSALI, TEHRI-GARHWAL (U.P.). Please send this appeal to all friends of Chipko in your country and the neighboring countries.*

*The Silyara Ashram buildings and library which were the headquarters of the Chipko movement and where many of you have visited, are completely destroyed. Books on ecology, environment and mountains will be welcome.*

*Yours Sincerely,  
(SUNDERLAL BAHUGUNA)*

# THE GANDHIAN PILL

## MEDICINE FOR MACHINE MAN

N. RADHAKRISHNAN

One-fifth of the world's population belongs to the age-group of 16-24 years old, defined as 'youth' by the United Nations. It may be distressing to remember that since the end of World War II there have been 150 military conflicts in which over 16 million persons have died. Most of those that have died are children and young people. Roger Rosinblastt, author of *Children of War*, wrote, "children and youth are, of course, the least consulted about their futures...nobody asks them, nobody gives them a choice, and the first thing that they are ordinarily asked to do by their governments is to 'fight.'" It may be of interest to quote here what the late Dr. Martin Luther King (Jr) said while addressing a group of Shanti Sainiks in Gandhigram in Tamilnadu in South India: "Our understanding of the youth has to undergo a change. They can play a great role in solving the various problems which elude satisfactory answers. It is not enough we praise their abilities. We should trust them and assign them responsible roles. I receive overwhelming support from youth in my non-violent struggle for social justice and peace".

A study conducted by the present writer in four different places in India recently, have revealed very interesting responses about the perception of youth on several vital aspects of modern Indian life. Five different types of conflicts that are sending shock waves in Indian society in different ways were selected to elicit the views of the youth because it was found that an overwhelming majority of those involved in these conflicts are young. The issues identified are: (1) the terrorist violence in Punjab (2) the violence that followed the Mandal Commission

*Was Gandhi a sectarian,  
an orthodox faddist  
going against the  
modern trend or did he  
stand for a larger  
universal wisdom?*



Report (3) the Naxalite violence in Andhra Pradesh (4) Secessionist violence in Kashmir and (5) The Mandir-Masjid controversy. The writer spoke to some of the active participants in these conflicts, thus being able to make an authentic collection of responses.

The answers received from them to the specific question as to why they indulged in violence are as follows:

i) Kashmir: Alienation caused by a social order insensitive to the aspirations of the youth, lack of job opportunities, religious propaganda, temptation from across the border, respectability with which a traditional society looks upto their rebels who challenge the might of the state, availability of quick money from loot or donation, free training in the use of weapons, political ambitions and excitement.

ii) Punjab: Free access to all varieties of arms, enormous media attention, hero-worshipping by others of those who indulge in violence, resentment against state violence. To avenge the killing of several innocent Sikhs in Delhi in 1984 seemed to act like a strong motive for violence.

iii) The Mandir-Masjid Controversy: A common opinion expressed by members of both the Hindu and Muslim communities is the fear that the future of their respective religions is at stake.

iv) Naxalite violence in Andhra Pradesh: Poverty, anger, economic disparity and social iniquities have been cited as the reasons for the naxalite activities in Andhra Pradesh.

v) Violence following the acceptance of the Mandal Commission Report: North India witnessed large scale violence and cruel deaths in the form of self immolation by a large number of teenagers protesting against the acceptance of the Mandal Commission



Report by the Government of India in August 1991. A fear of loss of employment opportunities, an uncertain future, education which fosters a random, casual, egotistic, happy-go-lucky approach to civic realities and responsibilities have been cited as the reasons for violence.

**T**o the question of the efficacy of adopting the Gandhian techniques of non-violence in solving these various problems, their response was negative and very often bordering on utter contempt. A closer examination of the views expressed by them on this particular aspect reveals that these young women and men were not properly exposed to the efficacy of the teachings of Gandhi for one thing and had a general feeling that the Gandhian method with its emphasis on non-violence is counter to their own stand. I have reproduced the above responses in order to invite the attention of all those who interact with youth, including the young people themselves.

It is a fact that no person in India below the age group of 30 had the benefit of seeing Gandhi in flesh and blood. Their awareness of Gandhi is from four sources, i.e. (i) books by Gandhi and on Gandhi, (ii) various programmes that are arranged from time to time on Gandhi in institutions, (iii) various Gandhian organisations and Gandhian constructive workers who have wedded themselves to the promotion of Gandhian heritage and (iv) Documentaries and feature films on Gandhi, and those produced for the radio and television. But the fact that Gandhi was miles ahead of all his contemporaries was perhaps reduced to a pale shadow of what that great revolutionary *actually* was by all the programmes that were being organised in the name of Gandhi. While books and other literature were found to be good enough as a source of inspiration, the

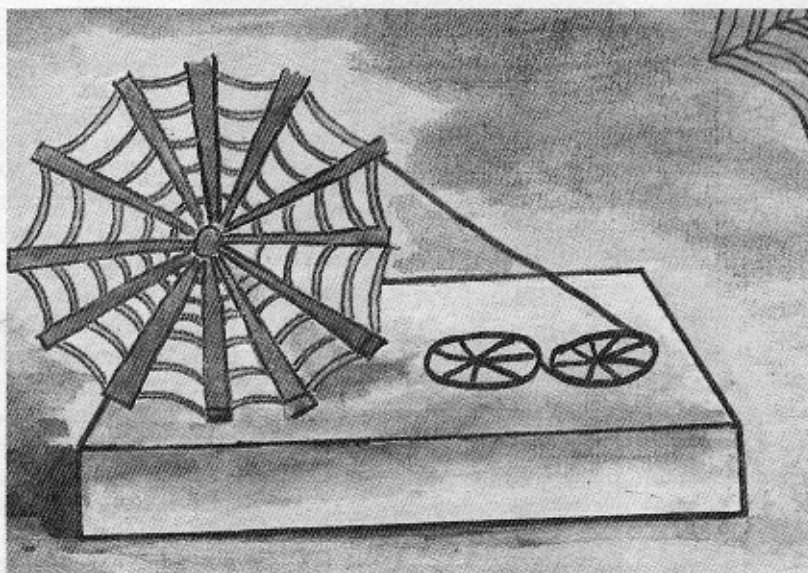
philosophy or the ideals propagated by a man like Gandhi whose theories and other pronouncements grew out of what he did and earnestly believed in, were gradually reduced to a set of dogmas. The model that we provided to the nation after Gandhi ended his earthly sojourn, are hardly appealing or inspir-

Gandhi, his major preoccupation was to prepare the Indian mind to face the challenges lying ahead once the British went out of India. The various activities Gandhi undertook when he was in the *midst* of the freedom struggle would indicate that Gandhi was more concerned about the *future* of India

rather than the immediate object of making India free. Programmes related to the removal of untouchability, sanitation, new education, ensuring equality of men and women, stress on non-violence, religious acceptance and various constructive programmes, all were part of a grand strategy Gandhi adopted in order to make India a strong modern state. The Sarvodaya concept which emphasises the welfare of all, particularly the upliftment of

the *daridranarayana*, the abjectly poor, his infinite faith in the purity of means and ends in order to achieve the goal and the simplicity with which he lived, all indicate the kind of man he was.

**B**y "development", Gandhi meant that it should be the development of all parts of the human body and he believed in the strengthening of democratic institutions right from the Panchayat level. He vehemently opposed the tendency of man becoming the slave of satanic machines in the name of progress. In essence, this frail old man who propagated the message of love and compassion, has developed a holistic philosophy of life and entertained a healthy world vision. He wanted a society which was free from all exploitation and where the destiny of man will be decided by man and not by machines. He exhorted everybody to hear the wonderful music of human hands and not just those produced by machines. "I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country, in whose making they have an effective voice; an India in which there will be no high class and



*The various activities Gandhi undertook when he was in the "midst" of the freedom struggle would indicate that Gandhi was more concerned about the "future" of India rather than the immediate object of making India free.*

ing to any segment of the population, least of all to the youth, who are described as the most volatile segment of the population.

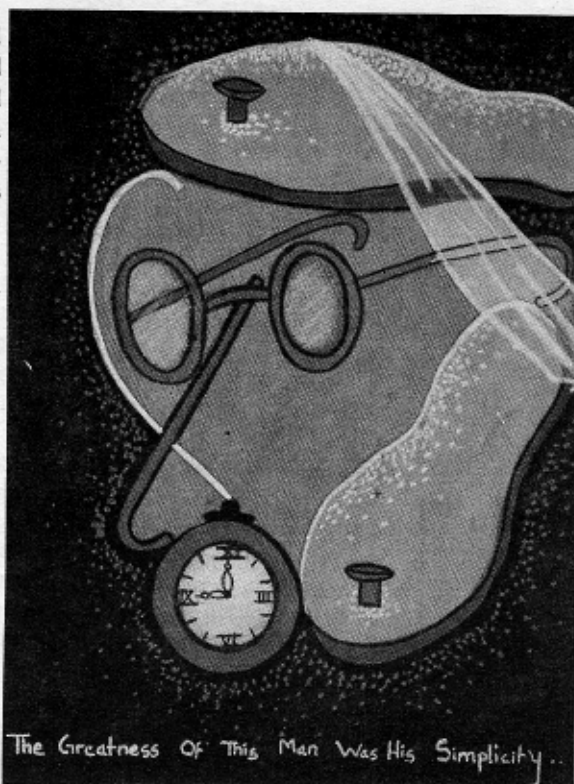
Nobody can deny the fact that Gandhi was one of the greatest revolutionaries of all times. It is a fact of history that it was Gandhi who laid the foundation for modern India by uniting various categories of Indians and giving them even the concept of a nationhood. While to get India liberated from foreign rule was certainly one of the concerns of

low class of people; an India in which all communities shall live in harmony. Women shall enjoy the same rights as men. Since we shall be at peace with the rest of the world, neither exploiting nor being exploited, we should have the smallest army imaginable. All interests not in conflict with the interest of the mute millions will be scrupulously respected, whether foreign or indigenous. I hate the distinction between foreign and indigenous. This is the India of my dreams".

Unfortunately in the post-independence era, Gandhi was hijacked by political parties and various other organisations and individuals for their own selfish designs. They did everything, including putting Gandhi in glass cases, naming roads, starting Universities and institutions, preparing massive volumes on Gandhi and conferring fellowships for research studies, hoping piously that these measures would be sufficient to propagate Gandhi's message. On October 2nd and January 30th, people wearing khadi and sporting Gandhi caps moving about cleaning streets, organising some spinning programmes and later speaking about the glorious sacrifice of the father of the nation, these are all familiar sights. A set of do's and don'ts were ascribed to Gandhi. Therefore, the impression was consolidated that here is a man who was feudal in his behaviour and orthodox in his outlook, and the revolutionary Gandhi was forgotten.

In the forty and fifties Marx became the prophet of great political and social change and Marxist principles attracted the imagination of the youth in a big way. In India, Gandhi was reduced to a "sect" or as someone who spoke about abstract aspects of human life like truth, non-violence, purity of means and ends etc. Peoples' disenchantment with the policies of the Congress party and the way Gandhi was hijacked by political parties also alienated not only a considerable section of the elders, but also the youth. The Gandhi, who was projected to them was hardly a Gandhi

*Unfortunately in the post-independence era, Gandhi was hijacked by political parties and various other organisations and individuals for their own selfish designs. They did everything, including putting Gandhi in glass cases.*



that was inspiring to them. There was a wave of apathy; a sense of frustration, general anxiety, problems related to education, unemployment and other forms of social stresses sweeping across the country and the so-called generation gap alienation, political alignment, social and religious stratification all created their own constituencies. Small wonder then that Gandhi became a distant figure to the post-independence generation.

The epoch making changes humanity is witnessing in almost all spheres in recent times make one wonder as to where to go from here? The various political developments taking places globally have raised new doubts. An

agonising reappraisal and a desperate search for alternative strategies are seen everywhere. The international community in this desperate search for a viable alternative political and economic system is increasingly turning to Gandhi. There is greater awareness of the Gandhian model of development and almost everywhere, political pundits, economic experts and even religious leaders are analysing the Gandhian model with considerable interest. Ironically, an undeniable fact is that now there are more research foundations, groups and centres devoted to the study and examination of Gandhian thought in countries abroad than in India. Nelson Mandela's prophetic words that the twenty first century belongs to Gandhi appear to be more than a mere ripple among to day's intelligentsia.

While all this is happening around the world, it can't be denied that the youth of India and surprisingly not the older generation, is showing considerable interest in Gandhi. There are clear evidences that more than ever before, during the last three decades, the youth of India are turning to Gandhi. But then, in the environment of general decline of values and all its accompanying ills, there are few sources of inspiration. Gandhi the revolutionary, the Gandhi who believed in the orderly development of society, the Gandhi who advocated the gospel of non-violence, the Gandhi who was against the tyranny of machines, the Gandhi who warned humanity against growing consumerism beckons the youth to action. There is a growing awareness that the Gandhian way appears to be the only way to get out of present difficulties.

*Dr. N. Radha Krishnan has been a trainer of youth for the last twenty five years while at Gandhigram University in Tamil Nadu. As a student he played an active role in the Student Union as Chairman, at the Panthalam N.S.S. College, Kerala. Among his twenty two books, are "Gandhi & Youth" and "Youth for Action". He is now Director, Gandhi Smriti, New Delhi.*



# NAGALAND

## BITE THE BAIT OR REINFORCE TRADITION

VIBHA JOSHI

**"N**agaland!"  
"Nagas are head-hunters. Aren't they?"

Or "Nagas are very westernised. Look at the Naga students, so modern! Always upto date with the latest Western fashion."

These diametrically opposite statements about the Nagas are frequent responses to any queries on Nagaland. Very few people are aware of life in the North-East of India, especially, in the tiny state of Nagaland.

Nagaland came into existence as a separate state in December 1963. Prior to this it was incorporated into Assam as the 'Naga Hills District' following the annexation of the area by the British

in the nineteenth century. As the name suggests, the whole region is mountainous and covered with dense forests, an extension of the Eastern Himalayas.

The inhabitants of the state, the Nagas, have always been portrayed in exotic terms. There are more than seventeen Naga tribes, each speaking a different dialect of the Tibeto-Burman language. Tribe names, such as, Angami, Lotha, Konyak etc, help the Nagas to distinguish themselves from the other hill tribes living in the surrounding regions.

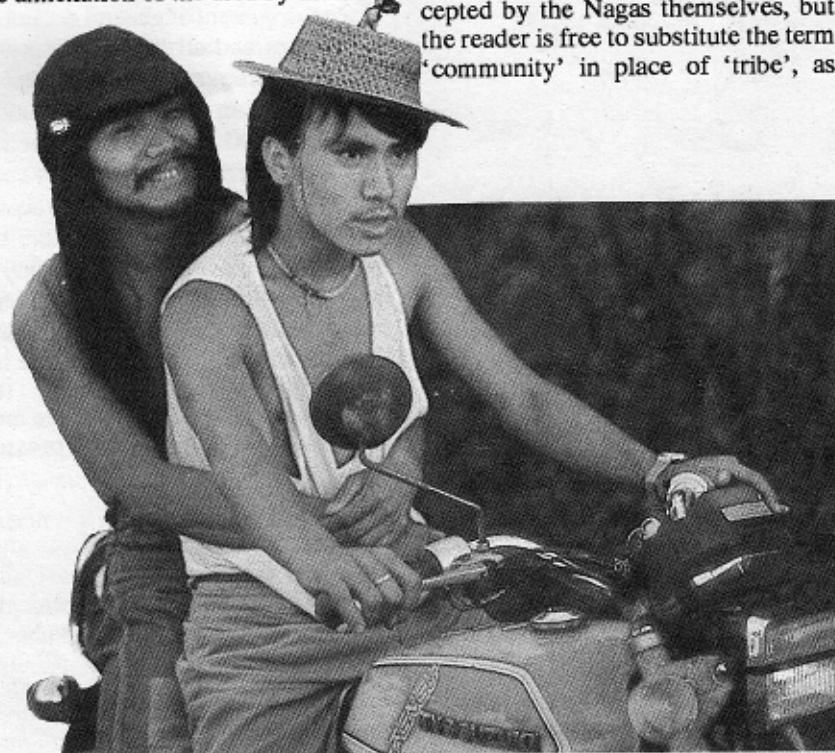
The Nagas have been identified as Scheduled Tribes by the Government of India. Hence, I have used the term, *tribe* for them. This term has been accepted by the Nagas themselves, but the reader is free to substitute the term 'community' in place of 'tribe', as

'tribes' in the true anthropological sense do not exist anymore.

Despite numerous differences in local customs and practices there are some features common to the majority of Naga tribes. As the terrain is mountainous throughout Nagaland, the scope for diversification of agricultural methods is limited. The majority of the Nagas practice "slash and burn" (*jhum*) cultivation on hill slopes. Only two tribes, Angami and Chakhasang, however, differ from the common agricultural pattern. Depending to a very small extent on slash and burn cultivation, they have developed a system of irrigated rice terraces which enables them to cultivate the same plots year after year.

Most Nagas build their houses on the highest points of hill ranges or spurs. The village is a congregation of units, locally known as *khels*. Each *khel* is composed of three or more clans. Traditionally, only one clan and its sub-clans occupied a *khel*. Nagas are patrilineal and patriarchal. Clan exogamy is generally observed, though this norm has often been violated.

The Naga communities saw a gradual change in their political and social system once the British took over administrative charge. Traditional life which the British administrators recorded in their ethnographies and travelogues, is far away from the life of the present day Nagas. Their simple tribal life, albeit self-sufficient and wholesome, could not withstand the onslaught of westernisation, which turned almost the entire population to follow Christianity. The modern education process which began with the American Baptist Missionaries, has, no doubt benefitted the people. Primary, middle and secondary schools have been opened up and university education has become available in each of the seven districts in Nagaland. While on the one hand the Baptists introduced modern education, on the other, they imposed severe sanctions against those participating in traditional rituals. As a consequence, traditional institutions and practices, like youth dormitories, feasts of merit given by rich villagers, traditional religion, shamanism, dance and music, etc. gave way to a homogenisation of culture, which, in toto became Christianised and consequently westernised.



Konyak youth on a motorcycle. Even in one of the most traditional villages of Konyak area such scenes are not a novelty anymore.

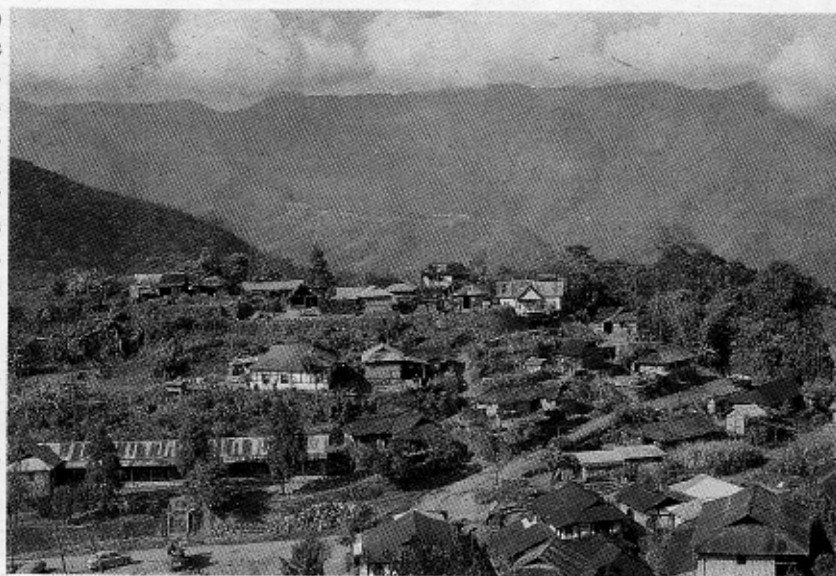
Religion and education have gone together in initiating crucial changes in Naga society. The youth are in sharp contrast to the people of the older generation. The inter-generational gap has widened. Educated young people prefer to enter the structure of new occupations like teaching, government and semi-government jobs, church offices, etc. They take up cultivation if they find it hard to enter bureaucratic and other occupations. Domestic labour which at one time carried out all agricultural and pas-

toral operations has given way to hired labour force, mainly from Nepal, Bangladesh and some Indian states like Assam, West Bengal and Bihar. For higher education, some Naga boys and girls have sought admissions in prestigious universities and vocational colleges, far away from home.

Education has become an important source of upward mobility. It provides opportunities unheard of by Naga ancestors steeped as they were in traditional tribal lifestyles. But it has also made the Nagas increasingly aware of money culture. In olden days, a rich Naga benefitted socially by giving huge feasts to his clansmen or the whole village. In certain instances even clans from the neighbouring friendly village were invited. These 'feasts of merit' called *Zatho* among the Angamis,

*In olden days, a rich Naga benefitted socially by giving huge feasts to his clansmen. These 'feasts of merit' called "Zatho" among the Angamis, fetched social prestige to their givers and at the same time had a levelling effect by redistribution of surplus products.*

fetches social prestige to their givers and at the same time had a levelling



*Jotsoma. The Church is a part of every village in Nagaland.*

effect by redistribution of surplus products. Due to the opportunities which "modern" education has brought in its fold, this cycle of distribution has been broken. Now-a-days any surplus is taken to the market and the money earned is spent in acquiring consumer goods such as, tape recorders, television and vehicles. Imported western goods have found their way into the remotest of villages. Dimapur's Hongkong Market and the super-market in Kohima are

loaded with foreign smuggled goods which range from perfumes, dresses, shoes to electronic goods. Indeed, a drive through Kohima's markets could well give you the feeling of being in some "stylish" parts of the far East. (Singapore maybe?)

The saddest victim of the money culture are the forests of Nagaland. Almost 90% of the forest is privately owned. Since the last decade the race to earn quick money has seen a boom in the timber business. Every second person you meet in Nagaland, irrespective of his educational qualifications (some are trained engineers while others have given up jobs in the army or left teaching positions in colleges) has entered this lucrative trade. There are more than a hundred big and small saw mills and saw-cum-veneer mills in Nagaland. The



*A young man in Khonoma village giving finishing touches to a carrying basket made by him.*



outcome is devastating; thick primeval forests that were left untouched for centuries are being felled at phenomenal speed. Elephants from the Assam plains are used for dragging the logs. Some of the hard wood logs which I have seen in timber factories were almost two hundred years old! There has been no attempt to stop the felling of these old trees, moreover, nobody has bothered even to plant more trees. The result is barren hills as are seen in the Phek and Mon districts, where the activity has been particularly heavy and consequently, there is an increased

occurrence of landslides. The forests around Kohima and Peren are the latest targets. That day is not far off when the old forests of Nagaland will be altogether no more. A fact with which even the timber merchants agree.

The happenings in Nagaland cannot be divorced from the politics of the state. The political atmosphere has been quite eventful in Nagaland since India's independence. There has been armed insurgency by the underground for their lands' sovereignty. In August 1947, nine members of the Naga National Council (NNC) sent a telegram declaring the independence of Nagaland to the Indian Government and to the Secretary General of the UN. The inception of Nagaland in 1963 and the declaration of the first assembly elections saw the formation of the political parties. The parties differed in their agenda; the moderates believed in more autonomy within the Union of India, while the extremists favoured secession and independence.

Encroachment of new democratic political processes has given fresh ties of political unification of various Naga communities, apart from the cultural ones which had existed from time immemorial. But the new politics has also created fissiparous tendencies, dividing the people along party lines, with each party adhering to different aims with regard to the political locus

standing of Nagaland. Some have alleged that these new politics and the flow of money from the centre for development projects has led to the



*Terrace fields of Khonoma. Angamis and Chakhasangs are the only Nagas who have developed a system of irrigated rice terraces which enable them to cultivate the same plots year after year.*

***There are only two options:  
one, that of grabbing the  
bait or the other of  
reinforcing their tradition.***

emergence of a culture of corruption, something which was unknown to the tribal value system.

Improper utilisation of available resources and political instability accentuate the crisis further. Nearly 30 crore rupees are given for development activities and projects by the centre as grant-in-aid. But when the outcome of such activities is studied, the results are depressing. It seems that nothing substantial has actually come about, except for an alarming magnitude of modernisation and westernisation expressed exclusively in the cultural realm.

But this does not undermine the value of Naga tradition. It is well known that modernization has a tradition-reinforcing effect, and so it is witnessed in Nagaland. Traditional dances of the Nagas have become a part of any festivity, be it the Independence Day cele-

brations or the Baptist Centenary. State efforts are making a desperate bid to keep them alive. Weaving, the traditional task of women, has been kept up and has been furthered by the weaving associations for women. In spite of commercialization of weaving, the cloth for domestic and ceremonial use is woven at home. But the commercial value of the acclaimed Naga shawls has reduced the distinct group identity of tribes once displayed by the typical designs, almost defunct.

Certain practices which have been responsible for healthy tribal communities like the institution of the youth dormitory, a primary seat of socialization in olden days and several rituals linked with the agricultural cycle have been discontinued in the wake of Christianity. However, it is heartening to see that in some places the agricultural methods (of both shifting and irrigated cultivation) are almost the same, baskets for carrying the produce and wood and big storage baskets for keeping the paddy are even today made at home from bamboo. Ethno-medical practices have been kept alive despite the Primary Health Centres in the villages. The dietary habits of the people, the methods of dispute settlements at the village level, are all still traditional. In recent years there has been a revivalistic movement and certain major festivals have been revived. Last year's gate pulling ceremony in Kohima is a fine example.

But present day Nagaland is very different from the descriptions one reads in the classical accounts of the Naga tribes. The transformation of Naga communities from a traditional society which sustained themselves from the hills of their life and the culture born of it, into a bustling, westernised, delinked community has occurred. There are only two options: one, that of grabbing the bait or the other of reinforcing their tradition. ●

*Vibha Joshi is presently working at the IGNCA, New Delhi.*



# RANI NI VAV

## THE QUEEN'S STEPWELL

One is hardly likely to find several pages dedicated to Rani Udayamati in any history book. Indeed, she will only be remembered as the wife of King Bhimadeva, the greatest crowned monarch of the Chalukya dynasty of Gujarat. His reign lasted from AD 1025 to AD 1063. Despite repeated attacks by Muslim invaders who looted and plundered, chief of them being Mahmud of Ghazni, Bhimadeva created throughout his reign, superlative monumental legacies such as temples, gates, stepwells and palaces. Gradually, as Muslim rule took over Gujarat's political, cultural and social life over the next hundred and sixty five years, several mosques, *madrasas* and tombs were built.

But, let us get back to Rani Udayamati. It was a common practice in those days for consorts or wives of kings to commission or patronise construction of water tanks, stepwells and other civic amenities for the benefit of citizens and travellers. Udayamati commissioned one such stepwell, which is almost humble in its anonymity -

RUKMINI SEKHAR



*A view of the well from above*

*Rani Ni Vav* or, the 'Queen's stepwell'. For sheer beauty and perfection of structure, it holds a prominent place amongst

Gujarat's stepwells.

A stepwell is an indigenous ground-water trapping system which ensures a permanent water supply. The people of the tenth and eleventh centuries, which saw peak stepwell construction in Gujarat, understood natural underground water systems and ensured themselves protection against inclemencies of rainfall, especially in arid, semi-desert conditions such as theirs.

A stepwell, as the name implies, has steps leading right down to the water level, unlike a common well where water is drawn up by a pulley. Since there is construction all around, the water is pretty much protected and the percentage of evaporation is thus reduced. Also, the stepwells, which were usually built on trade routes, were cool resting places for caravans. Water supply was ensured for beast and man, and they could even halt and stay there till they felt refreshed enough to proceed. Another theory is that the walls on the sides of the well prevents the onslaught of shifting sands, which is a common occurrence in Gujarat.



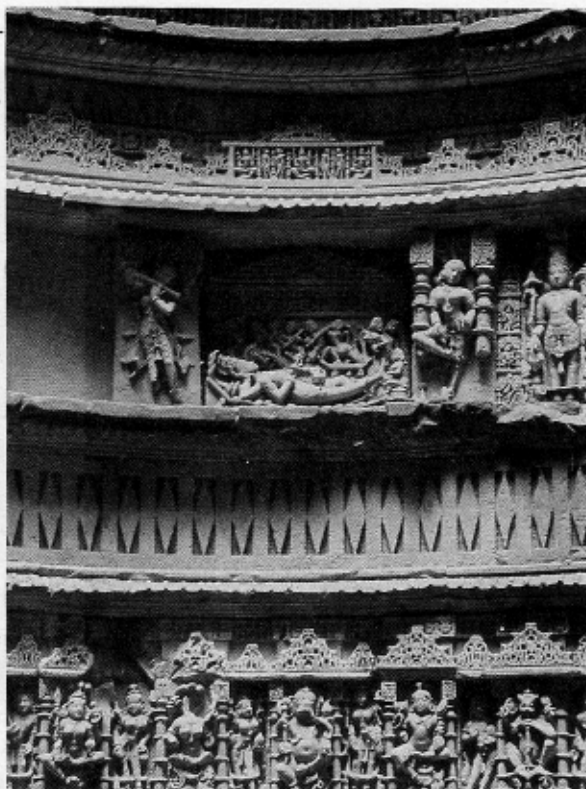
Here, these stepwells have reached an extraordinary level of sophistication, where the divine and life-giving property of water has been so gloriously deified. A traveller who visits *Rani Ni Vav* could not have helped but feel strengthened not just physically, but spiritually too. Quite unlike today's architecture which is banal and boring providing for no aesthetic or abstract upliftment.

*Rani Ni Vav* is situated a little away from a sleepy, little town called Patan, in Mehsana district, North Gujarat. Patan is perhaps better known for its Patola sarees, which tradition, sadly, faces imminent death, as its only practising family will tell you. Another ancient craft is about to die, and we wonder who is doing anything about it.

From the road, with its mousy, ugly fencing, the *Vav* is hardly visible. But, on going closer, one is suddenly stunned by the whole magnificent perspective of a graceful, wide entrance, gradually tapering towards the epicentre, the soul of its being, the well itself.

The *Vav* is divided into four courtyards (*angans*) and pillared pavillions (*kutas*). The pillar bases on top of the *kutas* indicate that there may have been more storeys, but we are not sure how many. At the lower levels, excavation is still going on. The entire structure is built in an east-west direction.

Once the eyes have settled down to the grandeur of the entire plan, they are immediately distracted by the sheer numbers of highly sophisticated sculptures that adorn every inch of space, on the side walls, pillar bases, brackets and the well itself. At the core of the well, and visible in a straight line from the entrance, lies the tutelary deity of the well, Vishnu, the preserver, Lord of the Seven Seas, patron of water and



Vishnu, patron of water and the overseer of the *Vav*.

*At the core of the well, and visible in a straight line from the entrance, lies the tutelary deity of the well, Vishnu, the preserver, Lord of the Seven Seas, patron of water and the supreme overseer of the *Vav*.*



The grand entrance showing the courtyards and pillars.

supreme overseer of the *Vav*.

The *Vav* complex is an iconographer's paradise. Several manifestations of the primordial deities, Vishnu, Shiva and Brahma and their consorts are liberally interspersed with the lesser, gods of the Hindu pantheon, such as, Surya, Bhairav, Hanuman, Mahishasuramardini and Ganesh. Devi, or the feminine principle, is seen side by side with awesome meditating *rishis*. Animals or lion face (*grasamukha*), birds, fruits, trees as well as perfect geometrical designs in squares, diamonds and circles fill every inch. The whole is arranged in friezes or panels. Some of the deities are ensconced in individual niches topped by pyramidal carving.

Force, dynamism, joy and sensuality jumps at you from the silent stones. One of our guides,

Mr. Rudra Rana, who is a Sub Inspector and self-styled "devotee" of the *Vav* believes that the whole force of the *Vav* lies in its tantric expression. The feminine principle, *prakriti*, Shakti, is indeed a dominant force and finds expression in symbols of fertility such as the snake, water jug, mangoes etc. Almost every such sensuous, sculpture is placed close to a serene, meditating *rishi* as he tries to conquer the primeval force of *Kama* (Desire).

One can go on about depictions of Vishnu's, *Dashavatara*, Shiva's forms or Hanuman's bravadoes. But, suffice to say, that *Rani Ni Vav* is an example of the highest aesthetic and spiritual evolution of man coupled with his understanding and veneration of the earth and its moving force ....water. ●

Photographs by Damini Singh

# DEBATE

Amphitheatre, Senate, Panchayat and the modern Parliament. Debates have been an integral part of the working of all societies. But what of all of us? Are we not exercisers of franchise, poised to be at the helm of future policy making bodies? Do we not have a role in bringing our voices on to the national forum? Our voices are the national forum. And this Written -Word -Debate is our effort to be heard. This is our movement.

TOPIC:

## MODERN DAY ADVERTISING IS LEADING TO THE CULTURAL DOMINATION OF THE THIRD WORLD.

- We wish to print a fair treatment of the topic. Therefore, the above motion must be debated for or against. Choose any **ONE** side.
- Your written-word-debate must be well thought out, have depth, vision and originality, and above all, make for interesting reading. It should not be longer than 2000 words.
- Send in your debate with your name, age and address clearly written in block letters. A brief, six-line bio-data should be included.
- The best entries, one **FOR** and the other **AGAINST** the motion will be published in our next issue. These two debaters will be entitled to one year's subscription, of **THE EYE** free of cost.
- Your debate will be printed in our March/April issue.
- We are looking for quality of thought and language, so keep that in mind.

Send in your entries latest by 15th April, 1992, to, The Coordinator Debates, 143, Golf Links, New Delhi 110003.

Are you a serious thinker? Would you like to see your debate motion debated by others? Send us your motion, neatly written, along with your name and address. **HURRY!**

**Good Luck!**

*Topic contributed by Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath, Principal, Lady Sriram College, New Delhi.*





# BALASARASWATI

## MY INSPIRATION

RANJINI BALASHANKAR

Eyebrows pop up and mouths open in amazement everytime I mention that I learnt Bharatanatyam from the legendary Balasaraswati herself. People are always curious to know how someone as young as I could have learnt from her. I have to explain that I studied dance from her during the last four years of her life and am her very last student. These situations have made me realise how unique the experience of learning from Balamma (as she is known to everyone) herself has been and I feel very fortunate to have been able to witness from close quarters and be part of the life of someone so great.

Balasaraswati was away in the U.S. when I joined her class at the Music Academy, Madras. During that time, the classes were being conducted by her senior students. Everytime a black Fiat drew up outside, all my fellow students would get excited and, surprisingly, a bit anxious as well. One day it happened. I was early to class and there she was, sitting as erect as a rod, all by herself, outside her classroom. In spite of not having known her before and being too young to realise her greatness, I could somehow sense that she was different and very special. The passing years only served to reinforce that feeling.

Balamma came to mean for me not just a teacher, but a model to be looked up to and followed. Everything she did or said, however simple or complicated, had its foundation on full sincerity and utter dedication. I think this attitude was a result of her belief in the tradition that she was born into. She used to say that what was most fortunate for her was to have been born as the grand-daughter of the legendary Veena Dhanammal, who was a musical institution unto herself. This is also why Bala was as much a musician as a dancer. Little Bala, it is said, would always be moving her feet in rhythm to the ever present music played or sung in the house. Matriarch Dhanammal, under the persuasion of mother, Jayammal, had to but give permission to the small child to learn dancing under

Kandappa Pillai.

Balasaraswati could be an untiringly strict teacher, on the one hand, making us do a single *adavu* twenty five times, even counting it on her fingers. On the other hand, she would be full of concern if any of our mothers tended to egg us on from behind. She would tell them, 'only the child and I know how much it hurts'. This kind of behaviour would confuse us at times. Even the mere mention of the same pain by us would be answered with a stern, 'it will pain, only then can you be sure that you are doing it the right way.' But her strictness was laced with great care and attention. Her compliments were few and subtle and when

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time she snapped out of  
her trance-like state and  
said, 'I was just seeing  
him. He looked so awe-  
some'.*

they did come our way, it was doubly felt.

**B**alamma's views on dance and music were something I have not felt or seen in anyone else. For her, the Gods she showed through her dance were real. I think she actually saw them before her. I remember her once, teaching us an *abhinaya* for a line that described Lord Shiva. After a while, she just stopped and stared into space with an expression of pure devotion and happiness. We students were quite bewildered. After some time she snapped out of her trance-like state and said, 'I was just seeing him. He looked so awesome'. And then she continued, telling us that she was merely describing what she had seen.



THE EYE NO.2 MARCH-APRIL 1992





● ●

*Bala's greatness was that she transcended the idiom of Indian dance. Martha Graham, the well known Modern Dancer of America remarked after seeing a two hour performance, earlier scheduled for ten minutes, 'Where have you been hiding all these years!'*

● ●

For Balamma, the divine *actually* existed in dance and music. Lakshmi, her daughter, had remarked once, that her mother knew that she was a good dancer, but she exhibited no ego, for she believed that the art was on a level much above her. It was this spirituality that made Bala the genius that she was. It was this that made her relationship to her art so unique.

**L**akshmi once told me of an incident that I can never forget. It was the day of Vijayadashmi, and, as usual, Bala had placed her dancing bells in front of Goddess Saraswati. After the *pooja*, she picked them up, but instead of tying them on to her own ankles, she studied them thoughtfully and turned to Lakshmi and said, 'Here, take them. With them I give you my all. This is all that I can truly say is mine. This is my inheritance to you and today, you can have it with my full blessings.'

To Bala, it was the art that mattered and not the material trappings of human existence. Lakshmi has indeed inherited her mother's talents in good measure and I am glad that I have been able to continue my tutelage under her after Balamma's demise.

For Bala, music was as divine an experience as her dance. According to her, one dances 'with' music and not just 'to' music. A dancer should know music. In fact, Balamma would sing aloud as she danced. A critic once said that if Bala had not become a famous dancer, she would have become a famous musician. She was the only dancer to have been awarded with the title, 'Sangita Kalanidhi' by the Music Academy.

Even now, people remember, Bala's performances as having been totally and completely elevating. Her movements were subtle and quiet, yet she radiated a great energy. A lady, remembering one of these performances which she had attended as a child, told me that when Bala was doing the famous piece, *Krishna Nee Begane Baro*, she jumped up and asked her mother to show her the child that the dancer was beckoning. I myself remember Balamma sitting in dance posture during her training sessions, explaining a whole line

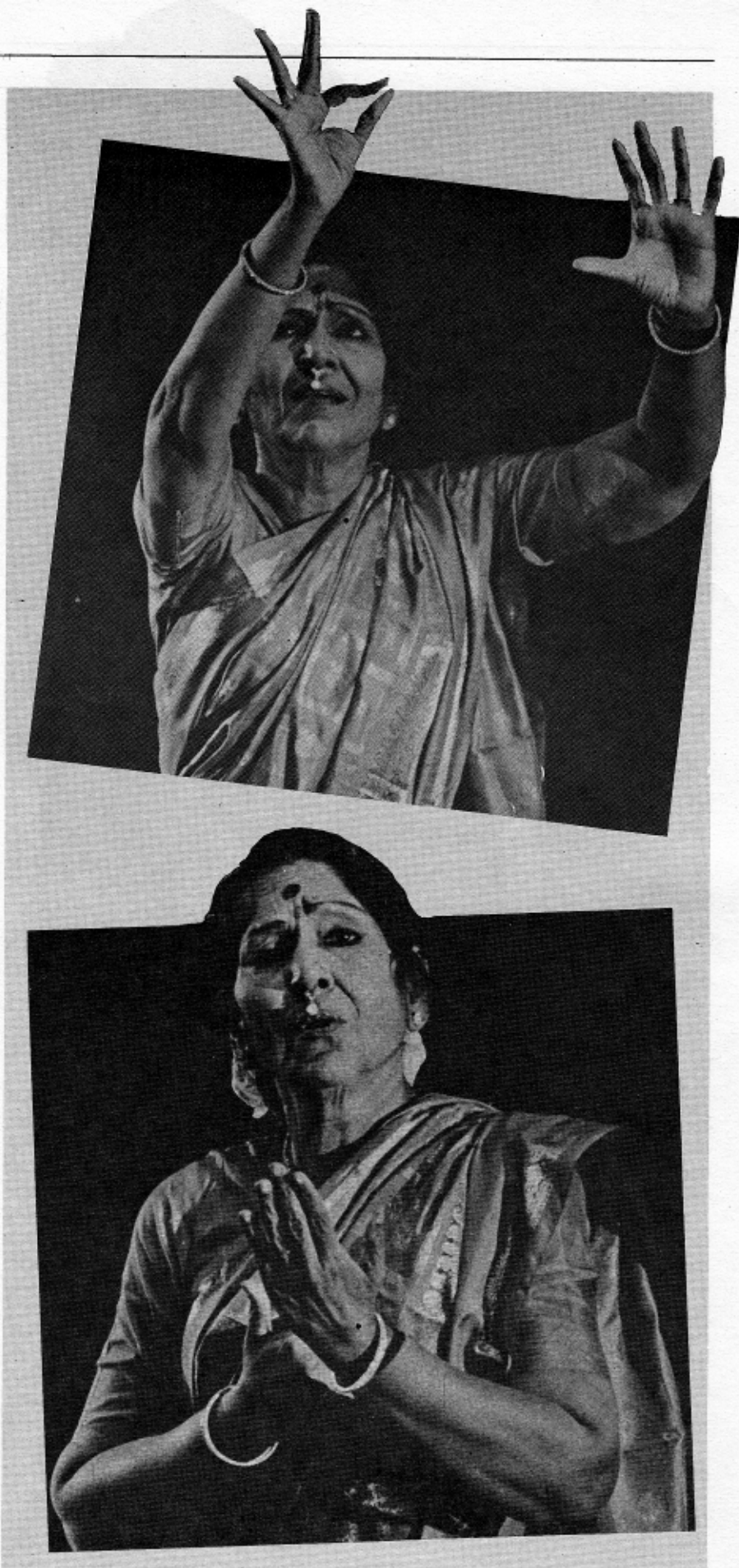
with only facial expressions.

Bala's greatness was that she transcended the idiom of *Indian* dance. Martha Graham, the well known Modern Dancer of America remarked after seeing a two hour performance, earlier scheduled for ten minutes, 'Where have you been hiding all these years!' For Bala's art there was no barrier. Age, cultural differences and language, posed no problem in her reaching out to her viewers. Emotions, such as love, compassion and devotion imbued her dance with a universality, rarely so refined in today's commercial scenario.

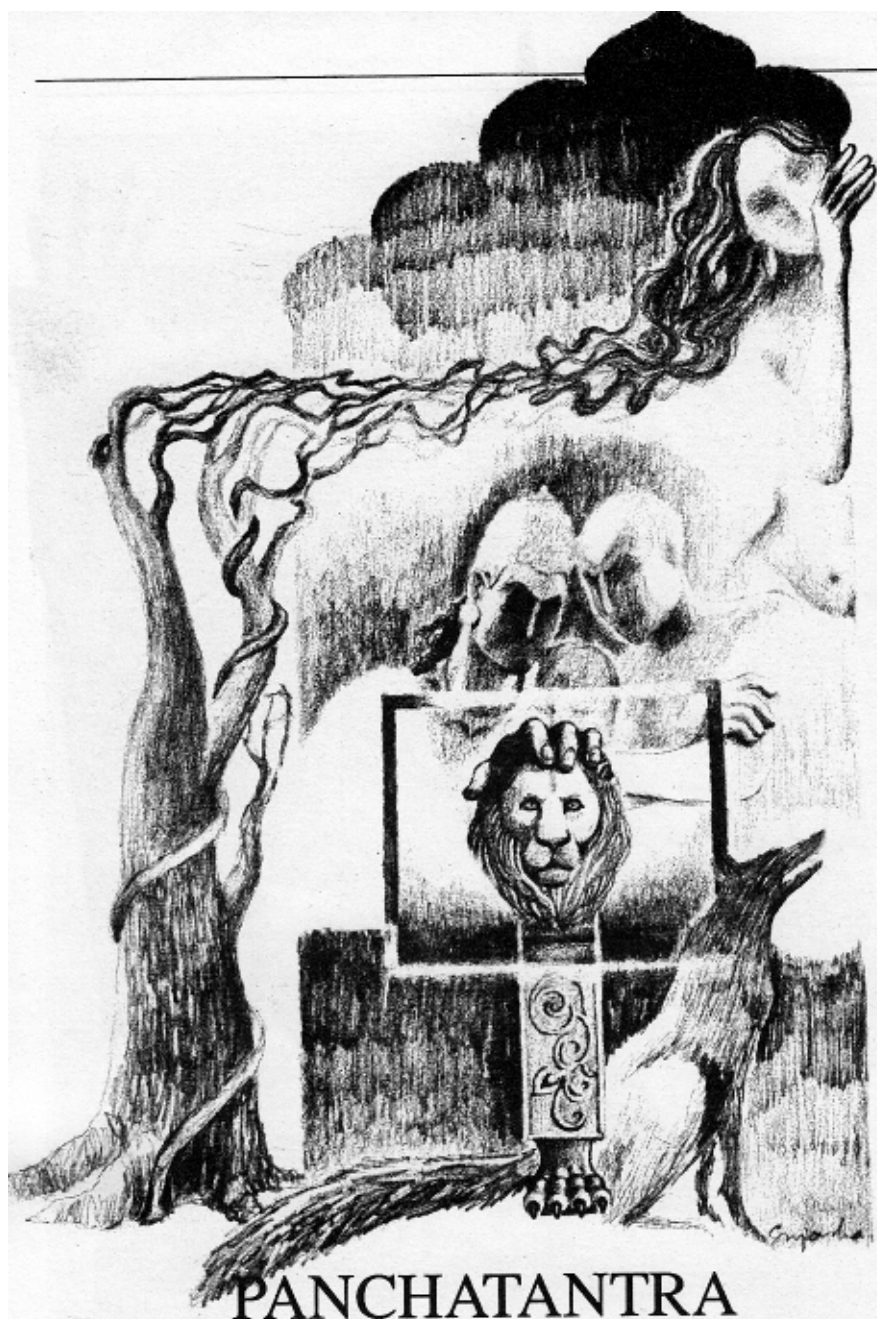
**B**ala was an intense person. The day preceding her performance would be spent in total silence. She would reflect on the pieces she was to perform, dwelling on the principal emotion of each piece. That perhaps explains why a piece which most dancers would take about forty minutes to go through, would take Balamma at least two whole hours. Her teaching was very intense too. She would teach us two variations of a line one day and then a different one everyday for the next one or two weeks. In the end, we would have fifteen or twenty variations. At the end of it, we were made to learn the complete scope that a line would have. The young dancer would now be in a position to *actually* improvise on stage. Even as we were taught the gestures, we had to sing along with them. Thus, as we sang, we would be aware of the flow of the body, which then was in a position to determine the meaning of our gestures.

I am overwhelmed by her sheer spiritual strength even as I reminisce about her in this article. She was a constant source of inspiration to everyone who came into contact with her. I am no exception. Even in her absence, this helps me, in my own small way, to combat the commercialisation that has entered the dance field today. Balamma was never to lower her standards for anyone or anything. I can only say that I have been blessed by providence which brought me in contact with this great lady, although only for a short time. ●

*Ranjini Balashankar, 23, is doing her final year, M.A. at the Stella Maris College, Madras.*







## PANCHATANTRA

It is said that an ounce of sense contained in the Panchatantra is better than a ton of scholarship. Most of us are familiar with it from our childhood as 'once-upon-a-time' stories and have read them in abridged forms or in comics. Rarely have we encountered a literal translation in verse form. Indeed these wise verses, often epigrammatic in style, go to make the real character of the Panchatantra. The stories are charming when regarded as pure narrative, but it is the beauty, wisdom and wit of the verses which lift the Panchatantra above the best story books.

The Panchatantra is a 'niti shastra' or textbook of 'niti'. The word 'niti' roughly means the 'wise conduct of life'. It is witty, mischievous and profoundly sane. The word, 'Panchatantra' means,

the 'Five Books', 'the Pentateuch'. Each of the five books are independent, consisting of a framing story with numerous, inserted stories, told by one or another of the characters of the main narrative. The device of the framing story is familiar in oriental works, as in the Arabian Nights. The large majority of the actors are animals, who have, of course, a fairly constant character. Thus, the lion is strong, but dull of wit, the jackal, crafty, the heron stupid, the cat, a hypocrite. The animal actors present far more vividly and shrewdly, undecieved and free of all sentimentality, a view, that piercing the humbug of every false ideal, reveals with incomparable wit, the sources of lasting joy.

And this is how it happened.....

*One Vishnusharman shrewdly  
gleaning  
All wordly wisdom's inner meaning,  
In these five books the charm  
compresses  
Of all such books the world  
possesses.*

### INTRODUCTION

**A**nd this is how it happened. In the southern country is a city called, Maiden's Delight. There lived a king named Immortal-Power. He was familiar with all the works dealing with the wise conduct of life. His feet were made dazzling by the tangle of rays of light from jewels in the diadems of mighty kings who knelt before him. He had reached the far shore of all the arts that embellish life. This king had three sons. Their names were Rich-Power, Fierce-Power and Endless-Power and they were supreme blockheads.

Now when the king perceived that they were hostile to education, he summoned his counsellors and said, "Gentlemen, it is known to you that these sons of mine, being hostile to education, are lacking in discernment. So when I behold them, my kingdom brings me no happiness, though all external thorns are drawn. For there is wisdom in the proverb:

*Of sons unborn, or dead, or fools,  
Unborn or dead will do:  
They cause a little grief, no doubt;  
But fools, a long life through.  
And again:*

*To what good purpose can a cow  
That brings no calf nor milk, be  
bent?*

*Or why beget a son who proves  
A dunce and disobedient?*

Some means must therefore be devised to awaken their intelligence."

And they, one after another, replied; "O King, first one learns grammar, in twelve years. If this subject has somehow been mastered, then one masters the books on religion and practical life. Then the intelligence awakens."

But one of their number, a counselor named Keen, said: "O King, the duration of life is limited, and the verbal sciences require much time for mastery. Therefore let some kind of epitome be devised to wake their intelligence. There is a proverb that says:

*Since verbal sciences has  
no final end,  
Since life is short, and  
obstacles impend,  
Let central facts be picked  
and firmly fixed,  
As swans extract the milk  
with water mixed.*

"Now there is a Brahmin here named Vishnusharman, with a reputation for competence in numerous sciences. Entrust the princes to him. He will certainly make them intelligent in a twinkling."

When the king had listened to this, he summoned Vishnusharman and said, "Holy sir, as a favour to me you must make these princes incomparable masters of the art of practical life. In return, I will bestow upon you a hundred landgrants."

And Vishnusharman made this answer to the king, "O King, listen. Here is the plain truth. I am not the man to sell good learning for a hundred land-grants. But if I do not, in six month's time, make the boys acquainted with the art of intelligent living, I will give up my own name. Let us cut the matter short. Listen to my lion roar. My boasting arises from no greed for cash. Besides, I have no use for money; I am eighty years old, and all the objects of sensual desire have lost their charm. But in order that your request may be granted, I will show a sporting spirit in reference to artistic matters. Make a note of the date. If I fail to render your sons, in six month's time, incomparable masters of the art of intelligent living, then His Majesty is at liberty to show me His majestic bare bottom."

When the king, surrounded by his counsellors, had listened to the Brahmin's highly unconventional promise, he was dumbstruck. He entrusted the princes to him, and experienced supreme content.

Meanwhile, Vishusharman took the boys, went home, and made them learn by heart five books which he composed and called:

- (I) The Loss of Friends
- (II) The Winning of Friends
- (III) Crows and Owls
- (IV) Loss of Gains
- (V) Ill-considered Action.

These the princes learned, and in six month's time they answered the prescription. Since that day this work on the art of intelligent living, called Panchatantra, or the Five Books, has travelled the world, aiming at awakening the intelligence in the young.

### THE STORY TILL NOW...

In the prosperous city of 'Maiden's Delight' there lived a merchant named Increase. He was of the opinion that money acquired should not only be guarded, but also wisely invested and increased. One day, the merchant set out for the city of Mathura in the pursuit of his business interests. With him were his two bulls, Lively and Joyful. On the way, Lively, overcome with fatigue, collapsed. Leaving Lively in the care of his servants, Increase proceeded on his journey. His caretakers, however, fearing the dangers of the forest, left the bull to die. But fate willed otherwise. Lively survived and soon became plump and healthy. One day, a lion named Rusty came to the bank of the Jamuna for water. There he heard Lively's powerful bellow. Rusty, the uncrowned king of the jungle, felt perturbed. He saw in Lively a threat to his power and pride. Now, Rusty had in his service two jackals called Cheek and Victor. These two conferred secretly as to the reason for their master's disconsolateness. Here, Cheek advised Victor against meddling in others' affairs in these words—

*Death pursues the meddling, flunkey:  
Note the wedge-extracting monkey."*

## THE WEDGE-PULLING MONKEY

There was a city in a certain region. In a grove near by, a merchant was having a temple built. Each day at the noon hour the foreman and workers would go to the city for lunch.

Now, one day, a troop of monkeys came upon the half-built temple. There lay a tremendous anjana-log, which a mechanic had begun to split, a wedge of acacia-wood being thrust in at the top.

There the monkeys began their playful frolics upon tree-top, lofty roof, and woodpile. Then one of them, whose doom was near, thoughtlessly bestrode the log, thinking: "Who stuck a wedge in this queer place?" So he seized it with both hands and started to work it loose. Now what happened when the wedge gave at the spot where his private parts entered the cleft, that, sir, you know without being told.

"And that is why I say that meddling should be avoided by the intelligent. And you know," he continued, "that we two pick up a fair living just from his leavings."

"But," said Victor, "how can you give first-rate service merely from a desire for food with no desire for distinction? There is wisdom in the saying:

*In hurting foes and helping friends  
The wise perceive the proper ends  
Of serving kings. The belly's call  
To answer, is no job at all.*

And again:

*When many lives on one depend,  
Then life is life indeed:  
A crow, with beak equipped, can fill  
His belly's selfish need.*

*If loving kindness be not shown  
To friends and souls in pain,  
To teachers, servants, and one's self,  
What use in life, what gain?  
A crow will live for many years  
And eat the offered grain.*

*For if there be no mind  
Debating good and ill,  
And if religion send  
No challenge to the will,*



*If only greed be there  
For some material feast,  
How draw a line between  
The man-beast and the beast?*

"But at present," said Cheek, "we two hold no job at court. So why meddle?" "My dear fellow," said Victor, "after a little the jobless man does hold a job. As the saying goes:

*The jobless man is hired  
For careful serving;  
The holder may be fired,  
If undeserving.*

*No character moves up or down  
At others' smile or others' frown;  
But honor or contempt on earth  
Will follow conduct's inner worth.*

And once more:

*It costs an effort still to carry  
stones uphill;  
They tumble in a trice: So virtue, and  
so vice."*

"Well," said Cheek, "what do you wish to imply?" And Victor answered: "You see, our master is frightened, his servants are frightened, and he does not know what to do." "How can you be sure of that?" asked Cheek, and Victor said: "Isn't it plain?"

*An ox can understand, of course,  
The spoken word; a driven horse  
Or elephant, exerts his force;*

*But men of wisdom can infer  
Unuttered thought from features'  
stir-  
For wit rewards its worshiper.*

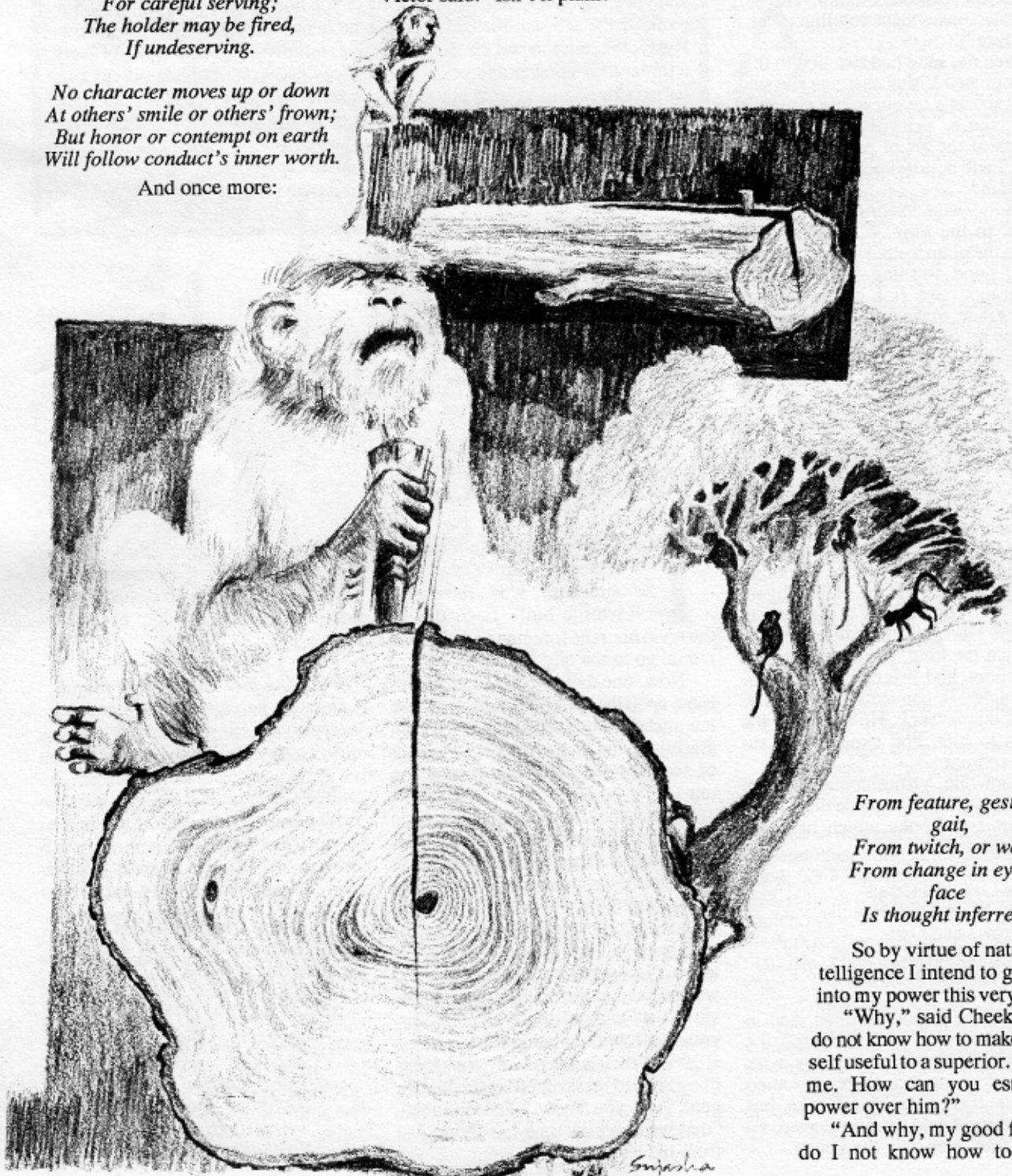
And again:

*From feature, gesture,  
gait,  
From twitch, or word,  
From change in eye or  
face  
Is thought inferred.*

So by virtue of native intelligence I intend to get him into my power this very day."

"Why," said Cheek, "you do not know how to make yourself useful to a superior. So tell me. How can you establish power over him?"

"And why, my good fellow, do I not know how to make



myself useful?" said Victor. "The saintly poet, Vyasa, has sung the entry of the Pandu princes into Virata's court. From his poem I learned the whole duty of a functionary. You have heard the proverb:

*No burden enervates the strong;  
To enterprise no road is long;  
The well-informed all pountries  
range;  
To flatterers no man is strange."*

But Cheek objected: "He might perhaps despise you for forcing yourself into a position that does not belong to you." "Yes," said Victor, "there is point in that. However, I am also a judge of occasions. And there are rules, as follows:

*The Lord of Learning, speaking to  
A false occasion,  
Will meet with hatred, and of course  
Lack all persuasion.*

And again:

*The favorite's business comes to be  
A sudden source of king's ennui,  
When he is thoughtful, trying scents,  
Retiring, or in conference.*

And once again:

*On hours of talk or squabbling rude,  
Of physic, barber, flirting, food,  
A gentleman does not intrude*

*Let everyone be cautious  
In palaces of kings;  
And let not students rummage  
In their professor's things:  
For naughty meddlers suffer  
Destruction swift and sure,  
Like evening candles, lighted  
In houses of the poor.*

Or put it this way:

*On entering a palace,  
Adjust a modest dress;  
Go slowly, bowing lowly  
In timely humbleness:  
And sound he kingly temper,  
And kingly whims no less.*

Or this way:

*Though ignorant and common,  
Unworth the honoring,  
Men win to royal favor  
By standing near the king:  
For kings and vines and maidens  
To nearest neighbours cling.*

And once again:

*The servant in his master's face*

*Discerns the signs of wrath and grace,  
And though the master jerk and tack,  
The servant slowly mounts his back.*

And finally:

*The brave, the learned, he who wins  
To bureaucratic power-  
These three alone, of all mankind,  
Can pluck earth's golden flower.*

And then he proceeds to explain how power is gained by dancing attendance on a master.

"Well," said Cheek, "when you come into his presence, what do you intend to say first? Please tell me that." And Victor replied:

*"Answers, after speech begins,  
Further answers breed,  
As a seed, with timely rain,  
Ripens other seed.*

And besides:

*A clever servant shows his master  
The gleam of triumph or disaster  
From good or evil courses springing,  
And shows him wit, decision-bringing.*

*The man possessing such a wit  
Should magnify and foster it;  
Thereby he earns a livelihood*



*And public honor from the good.*

And there is a saying:

*Let anyone who does not seek  
His master's fall, unbidden speak;  
So act at least the excellent:  
The other kind are different."*

"But," said Cheek, "kings are hard to conciliate."

"Quite true," said Victor. "However:

*The clever man soon penetrates  
The subject's mind, and captivates.*

*Cringe, and flatter him when angry;  
Love his friend and hate his foe;  
Duly advertise his presents-  
Trust no magic-win him so.*

And Cheek replied: "If you have made up your mind, then seek the feet of the king. Blest be your journeyings. May your purpose be accomplished.

*Be heedful in the presence of the  
king;*

*We also to your health and  
fortune cling."*

Then Victor bowed to his friend, and went to meet Rusty. Now when Rusty saw Victor approaching, he said to the doorkeeper: "Away with your reed of office! This is an old acquaintance, the counsellor's son, Victor. He has free entrance. Let him come in. He belongs to the second circle." So Victor entered, bowed to Rusty, and sat down on the seat indicated to him.

Then Rusty extended a right paw adorned with claws as formidable as thunderbolts, and said respectfully: "Do you enjoy health? Why has so long a time passed since you were last visible?" And Victor replied: "Even though my royal master has no present need of me, still I ought to report at the proper time. For there is nothing that may not render service to a king. As the saying goes:

*To clean a tooth or scratch an ear  
A straw may serve a king:  
A man, with speech and action, is  
A higher kind of thing.*

"Besides, we who are ancestral servants of our royal master, follow him even in disasters. For us there is no other course.

"And as for my master's remark: 'It is long since you were last visible,' pray hear the reason of that:

*Where just distinction is not drawn  
Between the left and right,  
The self-respecting, if they can,  
Will quickly take to flight.*

*There must be bonds of union  
In all their dealings, since  
No prince can lack his servants  
Nor servants lack a prince.*

"Yet the nature of the servant also depends on the master's quality. As the saying goes:

*In case of horse or book or sword,*



*Of woman, man or lute or word,  
The use or uselessness depends  
On qualities the user lends.*

"And another point. You do wrong to despise me because I am a jackal. For:

*Silk comes from worms, and gold  
from stone;  
From cow's hair sacred hair grass is  
grown;  
The water-lily springs from mud;  
From cow-dug sprouts the lotus-bud;*

*The moon its rise from ocean takes;  
And gems proceed from hoods of  
snakes;  
From cows' bile yellow dyestuffs  
come;  
And fire in wood is quite at home:  
The worthy, by display of worth,  
Attain distinction, not by birth.*

"Oh," said Rusty, "you must not say such things. You are our counsellor's son, an old retainer." "O King," said Victor, "there is something that should be said." And the king replied: "My good fellow, reveal what is in your heart."

Then Victor began: "My master set out to take water. Why did he turn back and camp here?" And Rusty, concealing his inner feelings, said: "Victor, it just happened so." "O King," said the jackal, "if it is not a thing to disclose, then let it be.

*"Some things a man should tell his  
wife,  
Some things to friend and some to  
son;  
All these are trusted. He should not  
Tell everything to everyone."*

Hereupon Rusty reflected: "He seems trustworthy. I will tell him what I have in mind. For the proverb says:

*You find repose, in sore  
disaster,  
By telling things to powerful  
master,  
To honest servant, faithful  
friend,  
Or wife who loves you till the  
end.*

Friend Victor, did you hear a great voice in the distance?"

"Yes, master, I did," said Victor. "What of it?"

And Rusty continued: "My good fellow, I intend to leave this forest." "Why?"

said Victor. "Because," said Rusty, "there has come into our forest some prodigious creature, from whom we hear this great voice. His nature must correspond to his voice, and his power to his nature."

"What!" said Victor. "Is our master frightened by a mere voice? You know the proverb:

*Water undermines the dikes;  
Love dissolves when malice strikes;  
Secrets melt when babblings start;  
Simple words melt dastard hearts.*

So it would be improper if our master abruptly left the forest which was won by his ancestors and has been so long in the family. For they say:

*Wisely move one foot; the other  
Should its vantage hold;  
Till assured of some new dwelling,  
Do not leave the old.*

"Besides, many kinds of sounds are heard here. Yet they are nothing but noises, not a warning of danger. For example, we hear the sounds made by thunder, wind among the reeds, lutes, drums, tambourines, conch-shells, bells, wagons, banging doors, machines, and other things. They are nothing to be afraid of. As the verse says:

*Bravest bosoms do not falter,  
Fearing heaven's threat:  
Summer dries the pools; the Indus  
Rises, greater yet.*

My master must take this point of

view and reinforce his resolution, not fear a mere sound. As the saying goes:

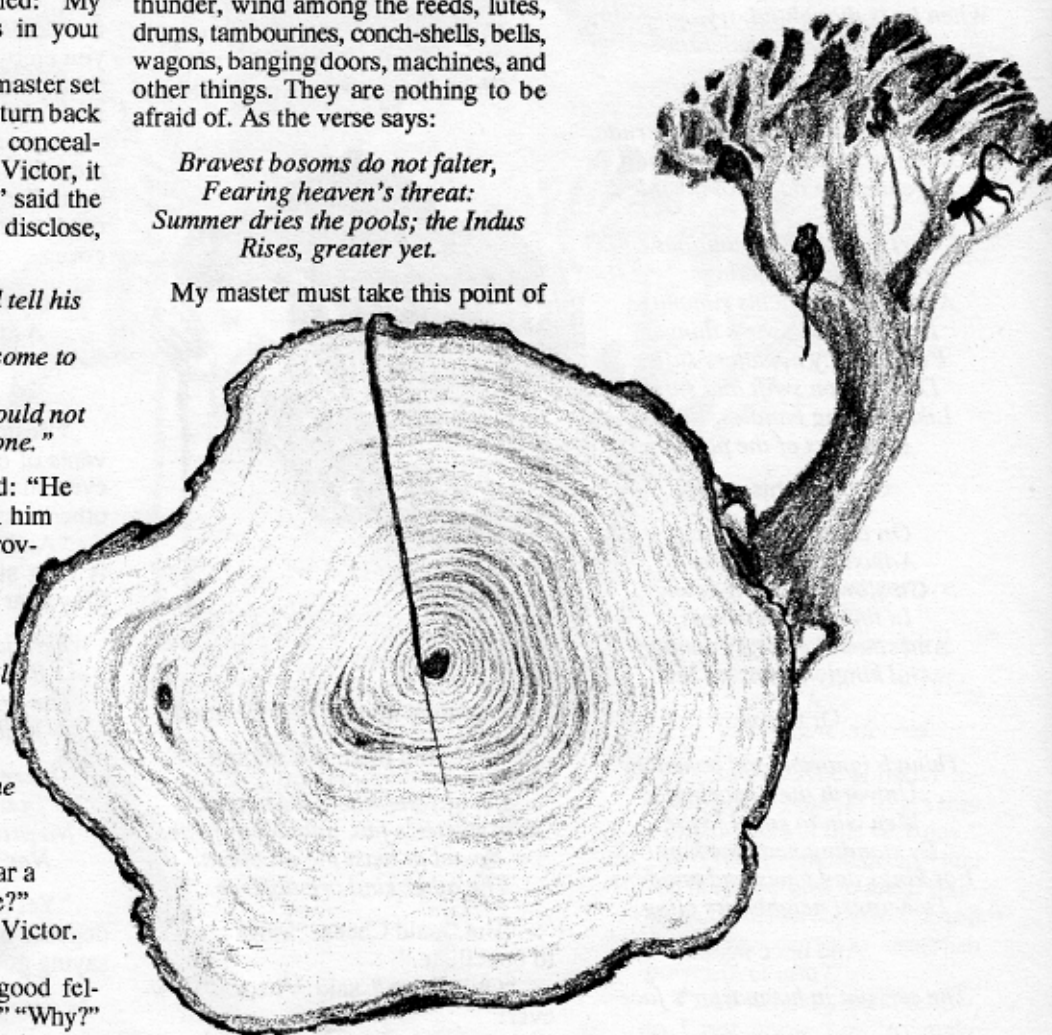
*I thought at first that it was full  
Of fat; I crept within  
And there I did not find a thing  
Except some wood and skin."*

"How was that?" asked Rusty. And Victor told the story of

## THE JACKAL AND THE WAR-DRUM

Continued....

*In 1924, Arthur W. Ryder, the well known American Oriental scholar translated the Panchatantra from Sanskrit to English. It is one of the best of all existing translations in any foreign language. The text here translated, dates back from the year 1199 A.D. We are happy to serialise and present the Panchatantra, interspersing verse and prose as translated by Ryder and published by Jaico. Illustrations : Sujasha*



# INDIAN MUSIC AND JAZZ

MANOJ PANT

I recall an Indian music concert about 10 years ago in one of Delhi's well-known music halls. The artist was Bismillah Khan.

Entry free by invitations. I could not believe my eyes when I reached late and found seats going a begging. Fortunately, all this has changed. Today,

halls are usually packed to capacity. Zakir Hussain, Ravi Shankar, Amjad Ali Khan, and Bismillah Khan are now household names. The purist could pontificate that Indian music is "commercialised". Be that as it may, the more redeeming feature of the development over the last two decades has seen the acceptance

and incorporation of Indian concepts in other forms of music. To my view the greatest gainer has been jazz. The sitar, tabla, ghatam are now almost standard instruments in many jazz bands. In the same vein, Zakir Hussain, L. Subramaniam, Vinayak Ram, Hari Prasad Chaurasia and a host of other Indian musicians perform routinely with jazz bands all over the world.

Is a musical synthesis in the offing? What brings together such seemingly diverse forms as jazz and Indian music? How is it that an L. Subramaniam and a Larry Coryell play so naturally together? In this article I will try to trace the evolution of jazz over this century and look at how the emphasis and basic structure of jazz has made this musical synthesis a natural development.

## EVOLUTION OF JAZZ

In categorising any form of music as belonging to a particular century, one really refers to the time in which its basic musical structure is defined. On this basis it is fair to label jazz as the music of the 20th century.



Hari Prasad Chaurasia

*The development over the last two decades has seen the acceptance and incorporation of Indian concepts in other forms of music. To my view, the greatest gainer has been jazz.*

Unlike western classical music, whose underlying structure was established in the 19th century, jazz is still a developing art form. The process of innovation and assimilation has not yet led to a final synthesis.

Any art form of an enduring nature, must go through this process of innovation and assimilation. That is why in the area of western music, I have made so bold as to call jazz, "the music of the

'80s. The rock and roll of the '50's, the 'acid' rock of the '60's and the 'pop' and punk music of the '70's and '80's - all have lent some thing to the development of jazz.

In themselves these forms of popular music are merely transient phenomena. How many people today re-

member who the Creedence Clearwater Revival were? What about Led Zeppelin and other such bands of the 'acid' rock era? Yet, no jazz man worth his salt can ever say he is unaware of the music of Louis Armstrong or Duke Ellington. It is in jazz, as it is developing today, that the 'popular' music of the last three decades will find its final expression.

To understand this process of innovation and assimilation is to trace the evolution of jazz. Jazz made it's small beginnings with Jerry Roll Morton and others in the black ghettos of New Orleans and St. Louis. Through the first half of this century, jazz came up against the bigotry of middle class, conservative America. "Jazz," it must be remembered, was originally a word employed in derogatory reference to negro slaves. The music then became 'black' music which every righteous, god fearing, white American must shun. By bringing jazz to the theatre and screen in the '40's and '50's Louis 'Satchmo' Armstrong gave it the kind of exposure and intellectual respectability difficult in those days of bigotry. To him also must go the credit for assimilating into jazz, the music of the past and developing a vocabulary specific to jazz.

The next phase in the development of jazz came with the 'swing' era of the '40's ('swing' here referred to the kind of rhythm peculiar to this music). Now a household name in America, Duke



Ellington ushered in the period of big bands. To Armstrong's melodic style he added orchestration. The rhythmic structure established, made jazz the dance music of that time.

The '50s brought in Chuck Berry, Elvis and rock and roll. In jazz there emerged something called 'be-bop' music. Technically, be-bop popularised the use of the 'flat-fifth' interval. The band became smaller, relative to the big band era, while rhythms and melodies became more complex. The names of Charles Mingus (bass), Dizzy Gillespie (trumpet) and Charlie 'Bird' Parker (saxophone,) come to mind. 'Bird', in particular, attempted such a break from previous melodies and rhythms that the old fashioned labelled his music 'modern'.

The fourth phase can be dated around the late '60s. While most of the world was listening to the innovations of the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, John Coltrane and Miles Davis were ushering in the period of the so called 'cool jazz' era. Incorporating in it, some elements of rock and roll, 'cool' jazz tones down the somewhat chaotic rhythmic and melodic structure of be-bop. In a dramatic break from the past, though in conformance with the mood and technology of that time, electronic instruments made their entry into jazz bands.

Finally, we have contemporary jazz which some have labelled 'modern jazz' and others 'fusion music'. Along with stalwarts of the '50s like Sonny Rawlins and Freddie Hubbard, the new brood of musicians like Chick Corea, Keith Jarrett, John McLaughlin and others have attempted a synthesis of rock, pop and traditional jazz-hence the term 'fusion' music. This phase has also seen, especially in America, the revival of big band music (Clark Terry, Joe Williams, the late Don Ellis). The spread of jazz institutions in the USA and Europe had much greater intellectual involvement that at any time in the past.

#### JAZZ AND INDIAN MUSIC

In recent developments in jazz, it is not uncommon to notice the free use of Indian idioms in the music. Polish bands, like Namyslowki's band and Niemen's band, which visited India some years ago, use melodic structures very similar to Hindustani music. What then is the relation between jazz and Indian

music? Or is there any at all?

The answer involves some technical discussion. In recent years, modern jazz has departed from traditional Western melodic patterns - the major and minor diatonic scales have been replaced by the Gregorian modes of the 12th century. Although jazz does not claim to be rooted in spirituality and the quest of the divine through the musical *swara* as Indian music's evolution and final development establishes, there are some similarities in form and rhythm. Jazz's freedom to

that these rhythms are commonplace in Indian music. I remember talking to Roger Sellers (drums) of the British jazz-rock band, *Nucleus*. I introduced him to some average Indian tabla players and he was astonished by the ease with which they handled what are considered complex rhythms.

Finally the form. The form of jazz music has remained unchanged over the years. After the statement of the theme (motif) comes the improvisation and then the restatement of the theme at the end. Indian music devel-

ops the same way - the theme (*alap*) is the *raag*, the improvisation and finally a restatement of the theme. To me, the crucial feature of jazz is improvisation. And what would be Indian music without improvisation? CONCLUSION

In 1980, the trio of John McLaughlin, Al Dimeola and Paco de Lucia (all guitarists) did a concert tour of U.S.A. I heard then in Dallas, Texas. After the show, I met McLaughlin (who has already shown his taste for Indian music in

his earlier band, 'The Mahavishnu Orchestra' and the more recent 'Shakti'). I asked him who he thought was the best jazz flautist. Came the surprising answer - Hari Prasad Chaurasia! McLaughlin has also, in the past, made trips to South India where he was learning the veena. The late Don Ellis (trumpet) also had a long flirtation with Indian music, leading to the formation of the Hindustani Jazz Sextet. Again we find Zakir Hussain (tabla) playing with the 'Shakti' band.

Jazz today is no more the music of 'black' America. Within America, it is heartening to find twenty-four hour jazz radio stations in staid Southern cities like Dallas where most white Americans still do not easily accept that John Wayne is dead and the days of cowboys and redskins are over. Much more important is the global spread of jazz - to India and as far east as Japan (Sadao Watanebe, Saophone). It is in jazz, I feel, that a true synthesis of the East and West is taking place and not in any violin-sitar *jugalbandis*.

*Manoj Pant, 38, has a Ph.D from the Southern Methodist University, Texas. He is currently an Associate Professor in Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi*



Gillispe: The Be-Bop era

**Within America, it is heartening to find twenty-four hour jazz radio stations in staid Southern cities like Dallas where most white Americans still do not easily accept that John Wayne is dead and the days of cowboys and redskins are over !**

experiment has made some of its practitioners look towards India for musical inspiration and the incorporation of Indian musical idioms have enriched jazz, finally evolving into a distinct musical genre. The use of five note scales is very similar to the experimentation with *oudhav raags* in Indian music. The net result is, melodies which have a very haunting effect (this is especially true of European jazz).

Rhythm is the basis of all jazz. One aspect of jazz rhythms is 'syncopation' or offbeat rhythm. Don Ellis, among others, has experimented with complex rhythms like 13, 17 or even 7 1/2 beats to the bar. It is interesting to note

# BOOK REVIEW

## COMPLEMENTARITY OF GANDHI & NEHRU

Edited by  
N. RADHAKRISHNAN  
& R. SUBRAMANIAN  
Published by  
Gandhigram Rural Institute, 1990.  
Price: Rs. 150/-

A rich treasure of literature is available on Gandhi and Nehru. Gandhi and Nehru, both separately and together held the centre stage during the most eventful decades in India's recent history. Naturally, therefore, their perceptions, their philosophy and their rôle in contemporary societies have all been the subject of much scholarly scrutiny. Yet, more and more literature continues to be added, as each generation embarks on its own interpretation of Gandhian and Nehruvian ideologies.

Indeed, it was not the first time that the complementarity of Gandhi and Nehru was deliberated, when the Gandhigram Rural Institute organised a National Seminar on the subject. It may have come as *deja vu* to many, but it was unique, because of the wide range and sweep of issues that were presented and debated by eminent people.

Now this literature is available for wider dissemination in the form of a book called the "*Complementarity of Gandhi and Nehru - its relevance, today and tomorrow*", edited by N

Radhakrishnan and R Subramanian and published by the Gandhigram Rural Institute.

Those familiar with the world of publishing realise the challenges of editing. This book is certainly one for a serious reader, but the editors have, through the facility of arrangement and classification, allowed to shape it interestingly different from the drab reports that proceedings of seminars tend to become in published forms.

For the facility of the readers, the book is in three parts. While the introductory part is devoted to the seminar itself, the other two are on broad thematic divisions - namely ideology, ethics and moral issues in one group, and humanistic, economical and social issues in the other. Some areas of over-

lap could not, obviously, be avoided. This classification also enables a reader to understand, for instance, the incisive analysis by Shri P C Alexander, as also in appreciating the philosophical approach of Shri Venkataraman, Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma and Shri Acharya Chandy. The essay by G Vijayam on the scientific outlook complements the social science approach of K Venkata Reddy, or that of Jaya Kothai Pillai when discussing Gandhi and Nehru on the subject of women.

Nehru was not a blind disciple of Gandhi, but had a mind and will of his own. Mr Venkataraman points out in his paper, "Complementarity of course is not identity. Destiny did not intend Nehru to be a reflection, however, accurate, of Gandhi". Differences, there were, between Gandhi and Nehru. Nehru was self-admittedly uninterested in some of the Mahatma's spiritual quests. Nehru's adherence to non-violence, unlike Gandhi's was not religious at the roots. His commitment to Fabian socialism was at variance with the Gandhian ethic of trusteeship. And, his faith in the need for industrial development, use of science and technology was different from the Gandhian idea that real freedom and peace could be reached only through societies based in villages.

The contributors to this volume have all sought, in one way or another, to stress the fact that Nehru believed no less than his leader in the equal importance of ends and means. There is an inherent unity in the larger purpose suffusing the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawahar Lal Nehru on social issues, such as world peace and rights, poverty, women's liberation etc.

While delving into the issues of identity as well as differences between the basic ideologies and temperaments of Gandhi and Nehru, the seminar papers answer a number of questions. What was the milieu into which the two leaders were born? How were the two great men drawn into the struggle for the liberation of India? How did they seek to restructure society, politics and the economy within India? But perhaps

### An Excerpt:

*"No force on earth could detach either of them from these values. A mutual recognition formed the basis for the powerful attraction between Mahatma Gandhi and Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and was the source of the vast symbiotic energy that flowed from them, irradiating the people, issues and environment them."*





the heart of the matter is the question - how relevant are their ideas to the problems which beset humanity today? The papers do not, however, attempt to give any ready made solutions to the problems and difficulties that beset our society and nation - biological decay, exploitation, malnutrition, erosion of natural resources and non-renewable sources of energy, pollution and other economic problems.

In the wake of the winds of change of liberalisation, of globalisation sweeping the world, India's regime of economic policies based on the Nehruvian model are stated by some to have failed. Many also believe that the Gandhian insistence on village as the focal point of development is irrelevant. But, is that really so? A reading of some of the contributions in this extremely presentable book should serve as words of caution to such sweeping negations or abjuration of values. One last word about the Seminar, itself - in spite of a

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preponderance of Gandhians at the seminar, the contributions have not been unfair to Nehru.

The editors, N Radhakrishnan and R Subramanian, and the Gandhigram Rural Institute deserve accolades for boldly bringing out this useful volume. It would undoubtedly form a valuable addition to the reference material on Gandhi and Nehru. And, indeed, the book is a faithful reflection of the "critical and honest attempt to re-evaluate

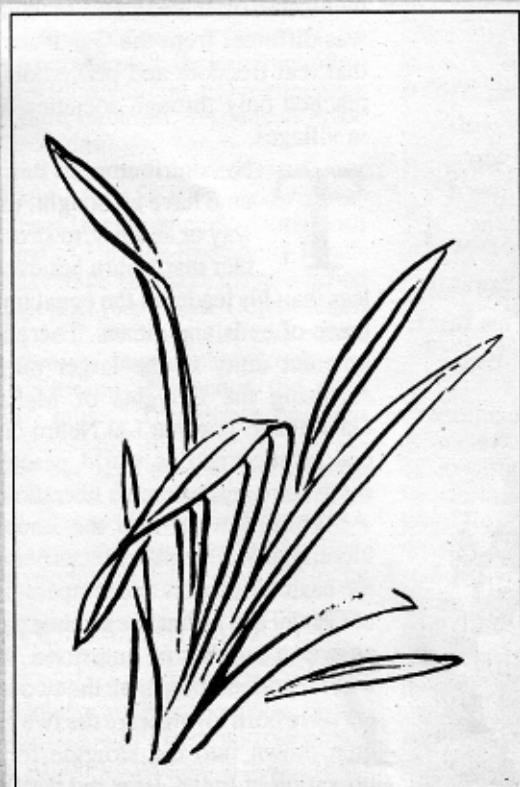
the minds of two outstanding personalities of the present century in depth", as the editors have rightly termed the seminar contributions.

Jayashree Menon Kurup

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*We will carry appeals from social cause organisations. Announce anything which will help someone other than yourself!*



## MATERIALISM

*The wise person leads a quiet and meditative life. But most people are busy getting as many possessions as they can.*

*The quiet path leads toward a more conscious existence. The busy path creates an exaggerated materialism.*

*Becoming more conscious leads towards a sense of the unity of all creation. But excessive consumption is only possible by exploiting someone.*

*The world's goods are unevenly distributed. Some have a great deal. Most have very little. We are running out of enough resources to go around. Everyone knows that.*

*Yet those who are already encumbered by possessions get more and more. They even brag about how much they have. Don't they know what stealing is? Owning lots of possessions does not come from God. People get it by manipulating other people.*



Our main program is to commence an afforestation project, in the region adjacent to Kadumane Village in Sakleshpur Taluk. This is in keeping with the major objective of contributing towards the welfare and upliftment of the disadvantaged rural community, through an integrated development program, of which afforestation is a major component. The other objectives are the utilization of wasteland and human resources for natural resource generation, in the form of food, fodder, fuel, fertilizer, etc., and valuable non-wood forest produce.

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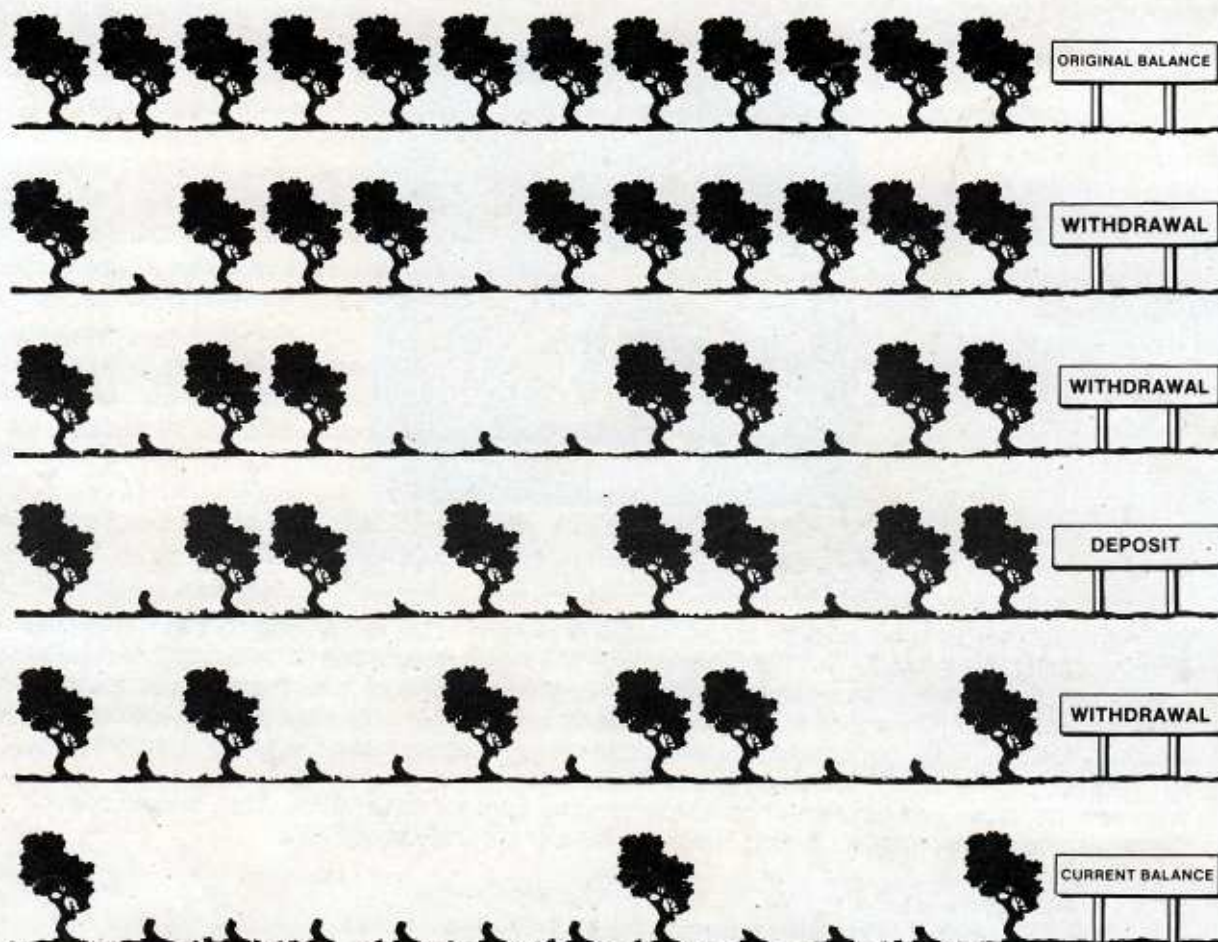
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